This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

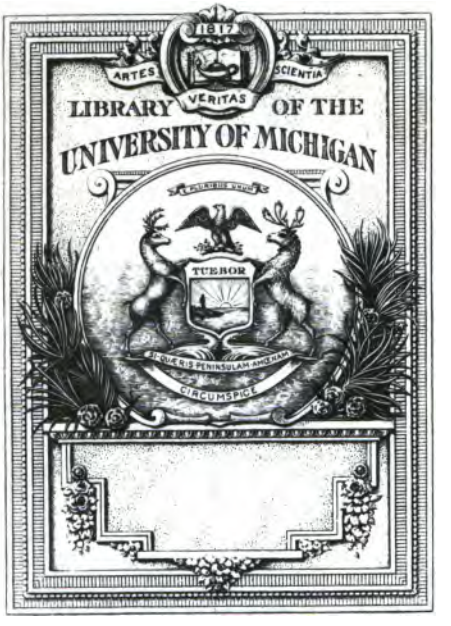
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

3 v06
1FC 7/6


1817
ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
TUEBOR
SI QUAERIS PENINSULAM AMOENAM
CIRCUMSPICE

828
S96s

SPLENDID MISERY.

Holt: Printed by J. Parfleu.

SPLENDID MISERY.

A NOVEL,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

T. S. SURR,

AUTHOR OF

GEORGE BARNWELL, CONSEQUENCES, &c.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. HURST, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1801.

English
Blackwell
10-2-35
30937
3 ore.

PREFACE.

IN a very flattering Critique, which M. Jean-Francois Andrè has done me the honour to publish in Paris, with his Translation of the Novel of "George Barnwell," after noticing the characters of *Mental*, *Barnwell* and *Milwood*, he observes,—"Il y a d'autres caractères dans le roman plus ou "moins estimables; mais il y en a fort peu d'inutiles; "puis qu'ainsi que dans l'action dramatique, presque "tous concourrent à former le nœud, ou le dé-"nouement; et cette conduite conforme à celle "du théâtre, est celle que *Marmontel propose, pour* "*donner au roman une plus grande perfection.*"

Proud as I am (and why should I conceal it), of this elegium, from the pen of a man of letters, a stranger, a foreigner, and even in a national sense, of an enemy,* the gratification of vanity is by no means the origin of its present quotation,

10-4-35 7.23

* *It appeared at Paris in the year 1800, and consequently during the late unhappy war.*

This opinion of Marmontel on the perfection of an art, in which he is universally acknowledged to have excelled, I learnt for the first time from the flattering application of it by M. Andrè. I have, however, long been persuaded, that the more a Novelist can confine himself within the rules of the Drama, so much the more he will be likely to attain the chief end of a Novel,—the rational amusement of a polished class of readers. The success of this plan has been strikingly displayed in the "Simple Story" of Mrs. Inchbald, and more recemtly in the "Belinda" of Miss Edgeworth. The footsteps of these writers might doubtless have been followed without hazard of the slightest deviation from the path of real genius and correct taste. I cannot but rejoice however in the opportunity of shielding my humble attempts under the auspices of so respectable an authority as Marmontel, especially as in this Novel I have endeavoured to approach nearer to the *Conduite du Théâtre* than in my former production.

The character of *Wallenstein*, in Schiller's Drama of that name, suggested to me an outline for the character of the Hero of my Novel, and I have even borrowed from my school-fellow, Coleridge, his translation of the Scene of the Astrological Tower. I am unconscious of any other plagiarism.

It becomes me to express the gratitude I feel for the indulgence shewn to my former productions, and respectfully to remind the critical reader, that the contributions, which as an *Amateur* I have the presumption to contribute to this department of the Republic of Letters, shrink from all competition with the finished labours of *professed literati*.

London, Feb. 1802.

SPLENDID MISERY.

CHAP. I.

A Narration.

"SHE's gone, Hanbury—ſhe's gone" exclaimed Captain Melville to his friend the Reverend Mr. Hanbury, who had juſt arrived at the door of a ſmall pleaſant retreat, called the Cottage, near Tenby, in South Wales.

"She has left me theſe two days" continued the Captain, "and yet I am alive,—yes I have outlived that ſeparation which I have often ſworn would be the breaking up of this old weather-beaten bark."

The captain ſtruggled in vain to conceal a few tears. "Fie, fie, man," ſaid Mr. Hanbury, "cheer up, cheer up." "No, never, never again—the trial has ſo ſhattered this old heart, that it is nothing now but a wreck paſt all repairing—I feel my old hull won't float long,—no, down it muſt go—and therefore I am happy in this viſit from an old friend before I ſink for ever."

"Come, come Melville, ſhake off this vapouriſh fit, look about you man, there are a thouſand comforts ſtill left for your enjoyment;—this pleaſant little cottage"—

"Pleaſant!—zounds 'tis as diſmal as a ſpaniſh priſon now ſhe has left it; and as to my favourite little cabin at the end of the roſe walk, where we have ſo often ſmoaked a pipe together, for the ſoul of me, I can't go near it.

Every

Every thing about it brings to my remembrance the kind attentions of my dear Oceana. In one corner hangs the ſampler, which ſhe worked when only five years old; and the flouriſhings, round the edges, I remember were worked by my poor wife, who loved her with the affection of a mother. Then in another part, are thoſe beautiful landſcapes which you and I have ſo often admired;—then, there you know hang the likeneſſes of our two ugly phizzes, painted by the dear intereſting ſoul;—beſides theſe, there's the head of the old man, worked in needle work, and —but pſhaw—why ſhould I mention her, why ſhould I think on her endearing, fond attention, when I may perhaps never ſee her again. !—Fool, madman, that I was to part with her, nay, to perſuade her to go."

"Recollect, my old friend, it was

a deſire to ſerve her that prompted this ſeparation, and doubtleſs it will prove advantageous. The friendſhip of two ſuch amiable ladies, as the ſiſters of Lord Latimore, was not to be rejected. Conſider that in this ſecluded part of the world, ſhe has not a fair chance of ſettling to advantage; and reflect what her ſituation muſt be, if ſhe remains without a protector, when providence may ſee fit—

"There again now—Hanbury it drives me mad to think upon my own folly. Had I not been the moſt eaſy gull, the moſt ſtupid dupe, that ever a ſcoundrel lawyer caught hold off, I might myſelf have ſupported her in affluence whilſt I lived, and left her a ſplendid fortune at my death. What an old fool muſt I have been. At the age of ſixty-eight, having acquired a few thouſands a year in return for many years

years hard ſervice, beſides the loſs of an eye and an arm, inſtead of lying at anchor in the calm bay of domeſtic tranquillity, I muſt launch into the rough ſea of Polities, and ſquander away wealth by wholeſale, for the honour of ſtanding candidate for a ſeat in parliament, and the mortification of being laughed at when I loſt my election as well as my money. It was ſo egregious a folly, that I muſt have been inſtigated by the devil, in his old ſhape of a lawyer, to have committed it."

"But why indulge in ſuch retropects as theſe? Why regret what can never be retrieved? Let us change the ſubject.

"No, Hanbury, now we are upon it, I will not leave it, till I have fulfilled the purpoſe for which I principally deſired this viſit—but you want re-

freſhment after your journey.

Having ſeated themſelves in the parlour, and being furniſhed with pipes and tobacco, ale for the parſon, and grog for the captain,—the latter thus commenced his narrative.

"Excepting you and myſelf, Hanbury, all who know her, believe that Oceana is my daughter. You have long known the contrary; but even you have hitherto remained ignorant of the circumſtances which gave her to my care. I ſhall now entruſt them to your ſacred keeping."

"You remember my firſt voyage in the Lion after I was made poſt; a noble ſhip ſhe was. She was then on the Mediterranean ſtation, and we were lying off Leghorn. At that port I received orders to ſail in ten days for the Eaſt Indies.—My

My wife, who, you recollect, accompanied me that voyage, was on ſhore while we remained off Leghorn. At the houſe where ſhe lodged, reſided an Italian lady, who was the ſubject of much tattle among the curious. She was pregnant, and paſſed for a widow: ſhe was called the Sorrowful Recluſe, from her dejected appearance, and the retired manner in which ſhe lived; for ſhe ſtudied every method of concealment. I know not by what chance ſhe was introduced to my wife, but, however, after a little acquaintance with each other, ſhe confided to Mrs. Melville her wiſh to leave Leghorn privately, and her deſire to ſettle in ſome diſtant country.

" The opportunity that preſented itſelf in the order which I received, to ſail for the Eaſt, appeared almoſt miraculous to the poor lady. My wife ſpoke the Italian as well as ſhe could ſpeak her

native language, and I, her huſband, commanded a ſhip of war, ſailing in a few days for juſt ſuch a diſtant place of refuge as this ſtranger was deſirous of reaching. My dear Mary, you know, had a heart ever ready to ſympathiſe with the unhappy; it is eaſy therefore to imagine that ſhe ſoon felt an intereſt in the ſufferings of one who appeared to be ſuffering unworthily. Her offers of aſſiſtance were gratefully accepted, and it was agreed, that the evening previous to our leaving the port, the ſtranger ſhould privately come on board. On the morning of that day, however, there arrived a meſſenger in great haſte, who brought her letters of ſuch a nature as to overwhelm the poor lady with anguiſh and terror. She fled on board inſtantly, accompanied by my wife, having diſcharged her only attendant, a female ſervant. All her baggage was compriſed in that little curiouſly-wrought box which

which you have ſeen in the cabin. To ſhorten the tale, I ſhall merely ſtate to you, that owing to the terror of her mind, or ſome other cauſe, this ſtranger was prematurely delivered on board the Lion, of the dear girl, whom I have called Oceana, not merely becauſe ſhe was born on the ocean, but becauſe I had always determined to give that name to my own child, had Providence ever bleſſed me with one, as a mark of my attachment to the ſea. The poor lady ſurvived the birth of her daughter only a few days, during which, though perfectly ſenſible, ſhe remained ſpeechleſs and almoſt motionleſs. The conveniencies I had ſtored aboard on my wife's account, her attentions, and the ſkill of my ſurgeon, preſerved the infant, though we loſt the mother.

" I had always been deſirous of children, and was not without hope that

my Mary would have preſented me with one in the courſe of that voyage. That hope Heaven ſaw fit to fruſtrate, and the preparations for the expected event were you ſee deſtined to ſerve us in another, which we could not have foreſeen.

" After the death of the poor lady our firſt thoughts were naturally led to a diſcovery of her name and hiſtory—for not one hint had ſhe dropped concerning either. My wife was the only perſon on board who could converſe with her, and to her ſhe had communicated no other intelligence than that ſhe was unfortunate When ſhe was taken in labour ſhe preſſed the hand of Mrs. Melville, and with tears entreated her to give her the conſolation of knowing, that if ſhe ſhould die in giving birth to another, her babe might find a parent in her. " The contents of the little box," ſaid ſhe, " will relieve you from all

all pecuniary burthen; and Heaven will reward you for your care. Assure me then of this, dear, benevolent, English-woman, and assure me further that neither you nor your husband will ever divulge to my child the story of its mother; educate it in the protestant faith, and give it no reason to imagine that its mother was a foreigner—if possible adopt it as your own, or at least take every precaution to prevent the possibility of its ever being claimed by those, who have persecuted to death its unhappy mother." Humanity dictated our answer to this request, and the dying smiles of the unfortunate mother expressed her gratitude!

"After her death I opened the little box in the presence of my wife, the surgeon, and a nurse, whom I had hired for the voyage, under the expectation already

mentioned. It contained pieces of gold coin to the amount of about ſix thouſand pounds, a golden croſs, Milton's Paradiſe Loſt, in Engliſh, (on the title page of which was written "Mortimer,") and a ſmall bundle of letters, all of which were ſigned "Mortimer," and directed to "Olivia." They were not in the ſtyle of love letters, but evidently the real ſentiments and feelings of a noble and well informed mind, on a variety of ſubjects. They were all written in Italian. The letter which had ſo much alarmed the poor ſufferer at Leghorn, completed the contents of the box. It was written in bad Italian, and ſimply addreſſed—"To Olivia." The literal tranſlation runs thus—"Honoured Lady, we are at Paris; your route has been diſcovered; very ſoon after this reaches you we ſhall be at Leghorn. Secrete yourſelf or fly the moment you receive it; London is the next point in our expedition,

pedition, if you escape us at Leghorn; you will therefore avoid England:—Wherever you go Heaven preserve you; direct your commands as usual, and if within the compass of possibility your faithful servant will fulfil them.

HY. BENSON."

"This was all the information we gathered from the contents of the box. From the incorrectness of the Italian in this last letter my wife concluded that Benson was an English servant in the retinue of her pursuers; but this and all else was vague conjecture, nor was there a single clue that could lead to any further discovery.

"The unfortunate object of our curiosity was committed to the deep.

"The infant thrived, and we continued our voyage without any thing particular

ticular occurring till our arrival at Calcutta; ſoon after which, the ſurgeon of the Lion baſely ſtole, from the helpleſs orphan, the gold he had ſeen depoſited in the box, and eſcaped up the country. I ordered a party of marines in purſuit of the ſcoundrel, who ſurpriſed him on the banks of a river with the gold in his handkerchief, for he had left the box and its other contents. Being an excellent ſwimmer, he plunged into the river, and attempted to croſs it. One of the marines raſhly levelled his piece at him, and ſhot him. He ſunk with the gold; and neither he nor the property were ever ſeen again.

"In the very ſame week died the nurſe, whom we had brought from Europe. The combination of theſe events removing the witneſſes to Oceana's true ſtory, we determined to adopt her as our own; a reſolution to which her poverty was now

now an additional motive. When we wrote to England therefore we informed our friends of the birth of a daughter, and in about four years afterwards preſented to them the lovely Oceana.

What a ſingular deſtiny the poor girl's is; deprived of parental care, ſhe was yet, at her birth, poſſeſſed of a little fortune, which I hoped with careful huſbanding to have made much larger,—*that* a villain ſtole:—well, ſtill ſhe was fortunate in the protection ſhe received from the beſt of women. Few girls of large fortune can boaſt ſuch an education. What with the elegant accompliſhments which Mrs. Melville taught her, and the ſolid learning which ſhe derived from your kindneſs, my old friend, where is there ſuch another?—I muſt be proud to ſay, your own Emma does not match her! Then in perſon, where is there a form ſo truly elegant, a face

a face ſo perfectly beautiful, intereſting, and intelligent. And was not there the faireſt proſpect of her inheriting a few acres at leaſt from me? When my poor brother Dick died, and the manor came into my hands, did not I always ſay every penny ſhould be her's—and then comes that d——d ſcoundrel of a borough-broker, Mendham, with his election projects, and kicks me down thirty thouſand pounds for the honour of being called an independent candidate, and a friend of freedom: thus reducing a really independent man to the ſcanty pittance of two hundred a year, and a Captain's half pay. Poor Oceana—yet to ſee how ſhe bore the change—to ſee her ſweet endearing ſmiles, her exertions to ſoothe my rough anger at the effects of my own folly! Then again, ſince we have loſt her whom ſhe conſiders as her mother, with what filial tenderneſs and attention has ſhe laboured

to

to ſupply her loſs. Oh Hanbury, Hanbury, what an old fool have I been to render dependency the lot of that dear girl, when I might, and d---me ought to, have left her the revenue of a princeſs: It makes me blubber like a milkſop in a ſtorm."

Here the unfeigned regret of the generous old Captain was affectingly evinced by ſome involuntary tears. It was not till after a conſiderable time that Captain Melville could ſufficiently command himſelf to ſtate to his friend, that his adopted daughter was, with difficulty, prevailed upon to accept the repeated invitations of her early friends, Ladies Julia and Amelia Latimore, to paſs the winter at leaſt with them. "At length," continued he, "ſhe reluctantly left me, upon your promiſe of lending me your Emma till her return, and now I am more than half inclined to recal her.—

Even

tainty. I ſhall never while I live ſo much pain the dear child of my adoption, as to remove the veil thrown over her birth, unleſs at the ſame moment I can reſtore to her a real father. Should nothing like what I have alluded to happen within a few years after my deceaſe, then, my friend, I charge you, take ſome ſuitable opportunity of diſcloſing to her the truth. Tell her that they who nurtured her, from the hour of her birth, loved her with an affection equal to that which nature plants in the boſoms of parents; and tell her further, that in death nothing cauſed me ſo much remorſe, as the remembrance of the folly, which compelled me to leave her dependant."

Here ceaſed the generous old Captain, whoſe boſom glowed with that pure benevolence, which raiſes human nature to an affinity with God himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

A Family Picture.

THE family into which Oceana, our fair orphan, had now entered, was of the very firſt conſideration.

The late Earl of Latimore had been an active and leading member of the Cabinet for ſeveral years preceding his diſſolution. He had lived long enough to hail the realization of his fondeſt hopes, for the aggrandiſement and improvement of his children's fortunes; for he had lived to ſee each of his four ſons approaching to the higheſt dignities that are attainable in the ſeveral walks of life, which they had choſen.—At the period of his deceaſe, his heir, the

the preſent Earl, was ambaſſador at Vienna; he had viſited moſt of the European Courts in high diplomatic characters: he poſſeſſed the confidence of government and of his ſovereign, and the path to the firſt honours and the ſupremeſt power of the empire, which a ſubject can attain, ſeemed ſmoothed to his progreſs.

His ſecond ſon, William, was colonel of a regiment of the Guards. His third ſon, Godfrey, was a biſhop, and was perhaps the youngeſt man that ever was honoured with the mitre. His youngeſt ſon, Edward, was captain of a man of war, a ſtation to which his gallant ſpirit, no leſs than his father's intereſt, had raiſed him. The friends of Oceana, Ladies Julia and Amelia, completed the family. Theſe ladies having at an early period of their lives been deprived of an excellent mother, had reſided

ſided principally under the ſuperintendance of a Governeſs, at Latimore Hall, in Derbyſhire.

In this retirement they had acquired many mental accompliſhments.—Lady Julia wrote and ſpoke the French, Italian and German languages elegantly and correctly. She had an extenſive knowledge of botany, and her pencil moſt admirably copied theſe productions of nature, which ſhe had made the peculiar objects of her ſtudy.

Lady Amelia, whoſe diſpoſition was more lively, evinced little inclination for ſtudy, or ſedentary amuſements; Muſic alone excepted, in which ſcience ſhe was a miſtreſs. She ſung ſweetly, and danced with a grace and agility very rarely combined. In their perſons, both were lovely, but Amelia poſſeſſed ſuperior attractions of beauty. The countenance

tenance of Julia was intereſting and expreſſive; but that of Amelia was intereſting in the extreme. A bluſh of health was relieved by a complexion remarkably fair, whilſt the ſparkling vivacity of her blue eyes, the laughing dimples of her cheek, and the arch expreſſion of her roſy lips, ſtruck the beholder with delight and admiration.

Julia rivetted the attention of her hearers by the intelligence, ſolidity, and grace of her converſation:—Amelia charmed every one by her lively manners and ſportive fancy. Univerſal benevolence warmed the boſoms of both, and the innocent and generous impulſes of their nature, alone, had hitherto been called into action.

Such were the young friends of Oceana, with whom ſhe had formed a ſtrict intimacy during her reſidence at the

the former feat of Captain Melville, in Derbyſhire, which happened to be contiguous to Latimore Hall.

Julia and Amelia, the former eſpecially, became affectionately attached to Oceana; and when the poverty of her ſuppoſed father drove her from Derbyſhire to Wales, their diſtreſs at her departure, and its cauſe, was genuine and deep: Their friendſhip continued unblaſted by thoſe winds of adverſity, which withered the fortunes of their friend. They correſponded regularly—ever addreſſing her as their ſiſter.

Upon the deceaſe of their father they removed to his town reſidence, in Berkley-ſquare, and had continued there, ſince that event, under the protection of their brother, the Biſhop, as the preſent Earl of Latimore had not yet arrived from the Continent.

With the conſent of the Biſhop they had repeatedly entreated the company of their friend, and the day now arrived, when the welcome tidings were announced to them, that Miſs Melville was at their door. With a friendly impatience to embrace their long expected gueſt, they broke through the cold forms of high life, and ran to meet her in the hall. Sincere ſalutations were exchanged, and ratified with ſweet kiſſes of ſiſterly affection. The rapture of meeting was ſucceeded by the eagerneſs of enquiry concerning the events which had occurred during their long ſeparation. Two hours flew away ere they conceived one had elapſed, and they were unexpectedly joined by their three brothers, who had dined with them, and whom they had left at the dinner table.

Ladies Julia and Amelia vied with each other in praiſes of their friend, as they

they introduced her to their brothers.

Colonel Latimore, who was celebrated for his gallantry to the fair ſex, was laviſh of his encomiums on the beauty of Oceana, and rallied his ſiſters, with much pleaſantry, for their folly in introducing ſuch an object, as muſt infallibly leſſen the force of their own charms.

The Biſhop was dignified in his demeanour, yet not haughty;---there was a ſettled calm upon his countenance that repelled the approach of levity, though, at the ſame time, it ſeemed to court the attention of the rational and the worthy. When Oceana was introduced to him, "I hope, Miſs Melville," ſaid he "that my ſiſters will evince their gratitude, for the favour you have done us in relinquiſhing the protection of a father and the

tranquillity of your own home, for the buſtle of this great city. They already owe much to your friendſhip and talents, and, I am ſure, it will be their own fault, if the honour of this viſit does not add as much to their improvement, as it has done to their obligations."

Oceana was about to return a ſuitable reply, when Captain Latimore, who had filled his glaſs with rather leſs diſcretion than his brothers, with a noble, open countenance, and a ſmile, that was the emblem of his light heart, exclaimed,---"So, ladies, in every thing I am to have a younger brother's ſhare---after the gallantry of a Colonel, and the ſentimentallity of a Biſhop, what chance have poor I?---I will, however, venture to welcome with ſincerity, ſuch a valuable addition to our family, and I wiſh to G—, the *old one* may

give

give her as hearty a reception as I do."

This honeſt effuſion of the young Captain rather confuſed the party,--- "William is a *ſailor*, Miſs Melville, " ſaid the Biſhop ſignificantly,---" By the *old one*, would you ſuppoſe he meant the Earl of Latimore? There is, to be ſure, a difference of more than twenty years in their ages, but, I believe, Lord Latimore is much more indebted to his reſerved turn of mind and his ſtate employments, than to his years, for the Captain's epithet of *old* ---is i'nt ſo, William?" "E'en as you will, my Lord," replied the Captain.

Whilſt tea was ſerving, a courier arrived from the Earl of Latimore, who was hourly expected: he announced that "His Lordſhip was prevented reaching town that evening, but that his Secretary would arrive about mid-

night, as he was charged with diſpatches for Government."

"Midnight!" exclaimed the Captain with a loud laugh—"Well done, *old one*: oh, if his Secretary had not arrived at midnight it would have been nothing—as it is, what a fine *diplomatic daſh!* If we have much more of this ſtate dignity," continued he, in a ſerious tone, "by George I muſt ſlip cable:—pray Miſs Melville," turning to Oceana, "are you of a romantic caſt; if ſo, you are fortunate; for you could not poſſibly have ſet your foot upon more romantic ground. Only picture to yourſelf a brother, who for many years has been abſent from his native land; who has devoted his days to the good of his country, and has ſacrificed all thoſe narrow *brother* and *ſiſter*, and *father* and *mother* ſort of feelings, which common people cheriſh, to the enlarged ſentiment

ſentiments of the Patriot and the States-man. When Providence deprived us of the moſt excellent of fathers, and we found ourſelves dependent upon the illuſtrious head of our houſe; inſtead of flying on the wings of love to us; inſtead of meeting us with a warmth of affection, that might at once remove all apprehenſions of his power, eſpecially from his ſiſters, he comes to us concealed in doubt, and covered with a gloom of myſtery. With none of us has he exchanged any of the intercourſes of a brother. Educated at a different ſchool; ſeparated in earlieſt youth from all of us, we are almoſt ignorant of his perſon, and totally ſo of his diſpoſition, except, indeed, by report, which paints him a myſterious, melancholy man. Since the death of our father, he has *once* condoled with us, by letter, in general, common-place terms; but all other, his gracious communications,

have been made through the medium of his Secretary—this ſame Secretary, who is to arrive here *about midnight*.—Now, Miſs Melville, if you have one ſpark of curioſity in your compoſition, you will not, fatigued as you are, think of retirement till you have ſeen this Secretary, from whom, though a ſtranger, we anxiouſly expect to glean ſome account of our own brother."

It was in vain, that the Colonel rallied—that the Biſhop remonſtrated; Captain Latimore at no time was very cautious of his language, and, at preſent, the wine he had taken rather increaſed than diminiſhed the deſire he generally felt to tell all that he knew, and honeſtly to utter all that he thought. The Ladies; Julia and Amelia, however, embraced the firſt opportunity of withdrawing, with Oceana, to their own apartment, where they more than confirmed

firmed all the intimations of their talkative brother. They confided, into the affectionate bosom of their friend, their apprehensions and their hopes, and not without tears lamented the loss of their parents, which placed them in so unpleasant a state of dependence upon a stranger-brother.

Tales of past times, and the anticipation of future scenes, so closely succeeded each other, that the bell tolled twelve ere a separation, for the night, was once suggested. Almost at the same instant, the trampling of horses, in the court yard, announced the arrival of the expected Secretary.

The hearts of Julia and Amelia palpitated. A carriage now rolled into the court yard—they heard the door open, and the step letting down.—"Perhaps my brother!" exclaimed

Julia. "Courage, courage," ſaid Oceana. Amelia remained ſilent.—They all three trembled. In a few minutes, a tap was heard at the door of the apartment. It was the Biſhop.—"Julia—Amelia,—may I come in," ſaid he. In a moment the door was opened. "You are alarmed, my dear ſiſters. Why do you tremble thus?" ſaid he, taking a hand of each of them. "You do the Earl much injuſtice by ſuch apprehenſions. Why anticipate any other than the tendereſt reception?" "Is he arrived?" enquired Amelia, "No," replied the Biſhop, "it is Mr. Elmer, his Secretary." "Has he brought any letters," "No," replied the Biſhop, "but he has ſome communications for you, my ſiſters, which, if it is not too late, he wiſhes to deliver to you to-night." They were too anxious to learn his communications to poſtpone the audience. Candles were, therefore, ordered

dered into the library, where, attended by their brother and Oceana, the ladies repaired, and where Mr. Elmer was requeſted to attend them.

Mr. Elmer entered, and was introduced to his ſiſters, by the Biſhop. The confidential ſituation which he held, threw an intereſt round him, which made him the object of ſtrict examination at the preſent moment.

He appeared to be about the age of twenty-five years; his perſon was handſome; his countenance noble and intelligent; his addreſs was eaſy, yet modeſt; and the impreſſion which his appearance altogether made on the beholder, was in every reſpect to his advantage.

"It was my Lord's particular order," ſaid he, "when I parted with

him at Dover, to uſe all poſſible means of reaching Berkley-ſquare to-night, as it is his intention to ſleep here to-morrow. He ordered me perſonally to make his moſt affectionate remembrances to the family, and particularly to the Ladies; to aſſure them that nothing but the moſt unremitting attentions which he has been obliged to beſtow on the objects of his embaſſy, could have prevented his writing to them, and to requeſt that they would have the goodneſs to ſuperintend the execution of his orders relative to ſome trifling arrangements, which, however, he ordered to me add, are neceſſary to his comfort. The firſt is, that a bed may be made up, for his Swiſs ſervant, in the ſame chamber as my Lord's:—the ſecond, that double doors of baize may be added to the entrance of the ſmall room, which was made uſe of by the late Earl as a ſtudy:—and laſtly, that

that the domeſtics, in general, be particularly cautioned, on no pretence to enter my Lord's preſence without his own ſummons."

Ladies, Julia and Amelia, looked at each other,—the Biſhop himſelf appeared ſurpriſed. Recovering himſelf, however, "Does the Earl enjoy a good ſtate of health, Mr. Elmer," ſaid he, "theſe precautions ſeem to indicate the contrary." "I have noticed no change in my Lord's conſtitution ſince I have had the honour of ſerving him; I never heard him complain of ill health." "You have reſided with him ſometime, I believe, ſir." "Nearly five years, my Lord; when the Earl left England on his preſent embaſſy, I was recommended by ſome friends, at Oxford, as an amanuenſis, to the Secretary to the embaſſy. This ſituation introduced me to my Lord—and he was pleaſed to honor me with

with his notice. He wanted at that time an amanuenſis for his own concerns, and offered me the ſituation of his private ſecretary, which I have had the honor of retaining to the preſent hour."

At this moment the Colonel and the Captain, who had been lounging away the evening at the Opera, joined the party in the library. They were introduced to Mr. Elmer, and made acquainted with the Earl's requeſts.

Captain Latimore could not refrain from laughter. "Excellent—bravo! I told you ſo, Miſs Melville, I told you, you would be gratified: and pray ſir," continued he, addreſſing Mr. Elmer, "has not his Lordſhip a few more excentricities of this kind. I hope he goes through the whole character of the High and Mighty Baron of Days of Yore!

Yore!! And ſo," continued he, "the domeſtics muſt not pop their noſes into his preſence; I ſuppoſe, ſir, he ſees no company at his table, but feeds on roots in ſolitude?

"Pardon me, ſir," ſaid Mr. Elmer, "you miſtake my Lord's character, extremely, if you think him a cynic. But, —I would not be thought too aſſuming, but, if I might adviſe—" he heſitated. "Proceed, ſir," ſaid the Biſhop: "the family will eſteem themſelves obliged by any intimation, which your connection with my brother may empower you to offer us,—be frank, ſir."

"Thus encouraged, ſir, *I will*," ſaid Mr. Elmer, "it is now, as I before obſerved, five years ſince I firſt ſaw the preſent Earl of Latimore: I was then very young, not more than nineteen. Yet the opportunities I had enjoyed, added

added to an enquiring mind, had given me a more extenſive knowledge of mankind, than generally falls to the lot of men ſo young. I ſoon diſcovered that my noble maſter was no common man. A mind with ſuch capacious powers, and ſtored with ſuch extenſive knowledge, I ſhould, till that time, have believed was more than human. The diſcipline of his mind appeared equally as aſtoniſhing, as its powers and attainments. I became not only his ſervant, but his diſciple: I watched his countenance when he was ſilent; and when he ſpake, my memory recorded every ſentence. From this vigilance, during a period of five years, it may be preſumed I know my noble maſter.

"If there are impreſſions which my mind has irreſiſtibly imbibed; if there are conceits, which obſervation and imagination have engendered in my brain,

brain, I am the keeper of my own opinions. All I will hazard is, that with the immenſe fortune—with the high rank, and extenſive power, which my noble Lord has received at the hands of fate, there is ſome ſpeck of miſery, which dims the ſplendour of his fortunes. I draw this concluſion from a ſtrict obſervation of his mind and manners; and I ſtudy inceſſantly to ſooth that anguiſh, which, I conceive, feſters at his noble heart. I have preſumed to ſay thus much in this preſence, chiefly with a view to prevent the infliction of unintentional wounds upon his ſorrows, for, I aſſure you, that ridicule would prove to his peace a deadly weapon, even in a brother's hands."

Every one applauded the candour and good ſenſe of Mr. Elmer; even the volatile Captain himſelf acknowledged his obligation to him; "for," continued

nued he, "much as I diſapprove the oſtentation and reſerve of the *old one*, yet I would not, for the ſoul of me, add the weight of a feather to the preſſure of real affliction." After a few more queſtions and anfwers, the family ſeparated for the night. Each framed his own conjecture on the account delivered by Mr. Elmer, and all felt an anxious curioſity to behold this extraordinary nobleman. Oceana, with this feeling of curioſity, mingled, however, the recollections of a diſtant home; and as ſhe reclined her head on her pillow, breathed the moſt fervent prayer to Heaven, that the protecting wings of the Angel of Peace might be ſpread o'er the couch of her father.

CHAP. III.

CHAP. III.

Cloſet Audiences.

THE following day, the Earl of Latimore arrived in Berkley-Square.

This nobleman was in the forty-ſecond year of his life. His perſon was a model of manly beauty, and his countenance was full of dignified expreſſion. His large eyes ſparkling with animation, and ſhaded by thick black eyebrows, and his cloſed and curled lips, indicated at once, penetration, wiſdom, and loftineſs of ſoul.

His preſence never failed to excite, even from the meaneſt beholder, the homage of a ſtupid veneration; but in the

the minds of the diſcerning, it created thoſe warm, yet reſpectful, feelings, which the contemplation of greatneſs and wiſdom inſpires.

The firſt interview of the Earl, with his brothers and ſiſters, was affecting. The nature of the exiſting circumſtances was ſuch, as to throw a diffidence in the way of thoſe natural emotions, which the occaſion would otherwiſe have drawn forth.

The addreſs of Lord Latimore, however, ſoon baniſhed the reſerve, to which his paſt conduct had given birth. The ebullitions of his love diſſolved at once the icy ſuſpicions that clung to their hearts; and the whole family hailed him as a brother and a friend.

Yet ſtill that dignity of manners, which was his ſtrong characteriſtic, ſuffered

ſuffered no diminution. Whilſt his expreſſions of kindneſs obtained their grateful love, the irreſiſtible impreſſion of his ſuperiority, tempered it with reſpect. The formality of all his actions, tended to increaſe this ſpecies of veneration in no ſmall degree. Thus after his firſt introduction, in which his declarations were general, and his diſcourſe was addreſſed equally to all the family, he retired to his ſtudy, taking his eldeſt brother, the Colonel, with him.

A cloſet conference there took place, in which the particular intereſts and individual concerns of the Colonel were canvaſſed, and arranged to his entire ſatisfaction.

When he retired, the Biſhop was ſummoned; and after him the Captain. Each of theſe extolled their brother as a paragon.

paragon. The Biſhop admired his learning almoſt as much as his generoſity, and was greatly aſtoniſhed by both. The Captain himſelf ſwore,—" that after all, the *old one* was a good fellow, for he had pledged himſelf to beſiege the Admiralty till his brother was Commander in Chief of the Navy. "

The Ladies Julia aud Amelia were ſummoned together, when he thus affectionately addreſſed them,—" Julia —Amelia—my dear ſiſters, " ſaid he, taking each of them by the hand, " may I, indeed, claim you as ſuch;—our deſtinies have, hitherto, thrown us ſo widely apart from each other, that I muſt aſk for your affections upon credit.—I have been deprived of all opportunity of evincing my love by actions, and have, I fear, been conſidered by you, at beſt, as a very negligent brother. Some allowance, however, I may demand on account of my public duties,—

duties,—and ſome further extenuation of my conduct might, perhaps, be drawn from the relation of ſome peculiar tranſactions of a private nature, but which, at preſent, I will not obtrude upon you. The ſolemn event which has committed you to my care, doubtleſs, inflicted on you inexpreſſible anguiſh. You had, indeed, cauſe of grief—that grief is now, however, I truſt, mellowed into a calm regret; to a penſive remembrance of the great and good man, who was our father. Your recollection of our mother muſt be faint; you were ſo young at the period when ſhe died; ſhe was, in all reſpects, worthy of our ſire. Indeed, my ſiſters, we owe the higheſt veneration to the memory of both our parents: may we evince it by an imitation of their virtues!

In the interviews I have juſt now had with

with our brothers, I have endeavoured to impreſs themwith a confidence in the intereſt which my heart takes in their welfare. I repeat to you, my ſiſters, what I ſaid to each of them,—that I conſider myſelf merely as the executor of my father's will. I am anxious to learn, what any perſon thinks, he would have expreſſed as his pleaſure, had he made a will, and I ſhall ſtudy to fulfil that ſuppoſed wiſh, as completely as if it had been a written teſtament. From my brothers, I rejoice to ſay, that I have obtained the confidence I ſought. The Colonel has frankly told me the ſtate of his pecuniary circumſtances, which I find are too much like a ſoldier's—I preſſed him to a more ample diſcloſure, and I find that the embarraſſed ſtate of his finances is the only bar to his union with a lady of ſome rank and fortune. This obſtacle, I am ſure, my father would have removed, had he lived to know it; and

and I hold it my duty to act as I think he would have acted. With Edward, I own I had ſome difficulty. He is a true picture of the Engliſh ſailor; rough in his manners, but honeſt and generous in his heart. He plainly told me, my reſerve had diſguſted him, and it coſt ſome pains to convince him of the folly of expecting me to write familiar epiſtles to him, or to any of the family, with whoſe ſentiments and characters I was wholly unacquainted. I perſuade myſelf, that Edward and I ſhall become very good friends, now we have acquired a knowledge of each other.

"I mention theſe circumſtances, to induce my ſiſters to a ſimilar confidence. I do not mean, that you ſhould immediately repoſe all your thoughts or wiſhes in the boſom of a ſtranger, as I am:—that is not to be expected. But, if there is a wiſh you would have ex-

preſſed to me, had you experienced for years my love and regard, I earneſtly entreat you to do me the juſtice of believing me as much your friend, as your own hearts can wiſh me."

Here the Earl kiſſed them both affectionately; and by the unexpected kindneſs of his words and manner, brought tears into the eyes of his lovely ſiſters. Having thus ſoftened their minds, and opened the avenue to their hearts, which was his object in this preface, he appeared to change the ſubject, by aſking them, how long they had been in London?

"Not a month," ſaid Julia.

"You prefer town to Latimore Hall, I preſume?"

Lady Julia. "Amelia does much more than I do. I ſo much prefer that ſeaſon of the year, which we ſpend at

at the Hall, to the dreariness of winter, that all the amusements of the metropolis do not compensate, in my estimation, for the change."

Lord L. "And you, Amelia?"

Lady A. "I own my preference for the charms of society to those of nature. London and its varieties are more pleasing to me than the unvarying beauties that surround the Hall, sublime as I own they are."

Lord L. (smiling) "But there are sometimes casual circumstances that attach one to situations. The company we meet is frequently more attractive than local attachment, either to town or country. Now it is no unfair surmise, that some sighing swain may beckon the one of my sisters to rural shades; whilst some choice spirit of fashion allures the other within the circle of London and its pleasures:—Is it so, ladies?"

Lady A. "I'll anſwer No,—for the town."

Lady J. "And I—for the country."

Lord L. "Well, well, I am not your confeſſor,—yet I hope to prove myſelf worthy of your confidence, if ever you have occaſion for the advice of a brother. One thing only, I think it neceſſary, as a matter of buſineſs, to aſſure you of. I have been conſulting my brothers, and we are unanimouſly of opinion, that the world ſhould know that the Earl of Latimore's daughters have an independency, ſuitable to their rank and birth. Deeds will be put in your poſſeſſion, my ſiſters, in a few days, which will make you as independent as you ought to be, and, I believe, as wealthy as the daughters of any Nobleman in the Kingdom."

The emotions of ſurpriſe and gratitude

tude in the breaſt of ladies Julia and Amelia, were inexpreſſible. They both, however, attempted to ſpeak, when the Earl ſilenced them. "No thanks—no thanks, my dear girls; you little imagine how ill I merit—" This unfiniſhed ſentence was ſpoken quickly, and with a ſtrong emotion. He ſeemed, inſtantly that he had uttered it, to be vexed that it had eſcaped him. "We—are all of us—we are none of us, I mean, entitled to—we are, at beſt, imperfect creatures. If, however, *in this inſtance*, I merit your approbation, I will, at leaſt, endeavour to preſerve it."—Waving the ſubject, he obſerved—"You have a friend with you, I underſtand, a Miſs Melville; I have ſome knowledge of her father: if I recollect right, he ſquandered a large fortune upon a county election. He was, at that time, our neighbour, in Derbyſhire. A well meaning man; a very

gallant officer, but, I believe, a bad financier. Is he living?"

The kind girls eagerly embraced this opportunity of relating the ſituation of Oceana; extolling her to the very pinnacle of praiſe.

"So, ſo!" exclaimed his Lordſhip, "Is ſhe ſuch a paragon, indeed! I have no recollection of her. And ſo poor Melville has become ſhipwrecked on the rocks of poverty, in his old age!—Poor old man! Well, I muſt take ſome opportunity of knowing this Oceana Melville. Do you introduce her to your parties?"

Lady J. "She arrived in town only yeſterday."

Lord L. "Melville is a gentleman, by profeſſion, and his daughter may, doubtleſs, be introduced to any company: only endeavour to conceal her poverty.

poverty. Her accompliſhments will not ſerve her, with the great or the rich. They will rather excite their envy than their admiration. Be cautious, therefore, that you do not expoſe her to contempt. If ſhe is a young woman of that ſtrong ſenſe you repreſent her to be, ſhe may, without danger, walk awhile among the faſhionable world; but, to weak minds, there could not be a more hazardous ſituation than her's. You muſt procure for her the patronage of the Ducheſs of Derrington, and then, whatever her *ſterling* merit may be, ſhe will paſs *current* at every houſe of faſhion in the metropolis—I mean, if her Grace is ſtill, as I underſtand, the *Leader of Faſhion.*"

"No one has yet even attempted a rivalſhip with her Grace," ſaid Amelia. "And you are on good terms," ſaid the Earl. "The moſt friendly," replied Amelia.

"Well," ſighed the Earl, and pauſed a few ſeconds,—"Well, my dear ſiſters, I have entered, as far as I am able, on ſo ſlight acquaintance, into your concerns; let me draw your attention, a moment or two, to mine"—again he pauſed.—"I ſhall, I truſt, be found, even under all circumſtances, not unworthy of your affection. You cannot better evince that affection, than by a compliance—a moſt ſtrict compliance with thoſe trifling requeſts, which I made to you yeſterday, through my ſecretary. My motive, for ſuch requeſts, I am ſure, it is not neceſſary to be acquainted with, to obtain your compliance. 'Tis my whim—my humour; call it by what name you will, but only let me be gratified in that whim—let me be indulged in that humour; and, if any other part of my conduct aſſumes a ſhape not perfectly underſtood, impute it to my liking, and

and let it paſs. Give me my humour. If, to-day I chooſe to be alone—to-morrow give a route—the next day go abroad—the next confine myſelf all day to my own ſtudy:—let all this paſs without enquiries; which, but for this caution, your kindneſs would, no doubt, induce. If I mix among the men of the world, I may do it for your ſakes, and as your guardian. If I chooſe to ſhut myſelf from all the world, forego ſociety, and forget to take my food, remember, that there may be objects of a man's ambition, which to attain, no ſacrifices are too great. In ſhort, give me my humour, my dear girls, and though you may marvel at my conduct to myſelf, you ſhall not have juſt cauſe to murmur at my behaviour to you." He embraced them again affectionately, and then requeſted them to leave him, and rung for his ſecretary.

CHAP. IV.

Portrait of a Ducheſs.

IT was now the month of January. London became thronged with the votaries of faſhion and of pleaſure. Bond-ſtreet ſeemed a lobby, crouded with male and female loungers. The ſquares were nightly illuminated by the blaze of flambeaux; the ſhrill pipes of the watchmen were overpowered by the more powerful clamour of rolling chariot-wheels; and the public places of amuſement now drew together vaſt aſſemblages, diſplaying, at one view, the magnificence, taſte, opulence, and luxury of the age. In the plain language of faſhion—"The Birth-day was over," and it was now the *heighth of the ſeaſon*. Time

Time immemorial, as the annals of Faſhion record, there has been acknowledged, by the Faſhionable world, a ſovereign Dictator.

In ancient days, when paſtime was the buſineſs of life, this ſupreme power was, in general, exerciſed by man; but, in later times, it has devolved on woman. The ſervice of the Britiſh Monarch is not now the preparation of a tournament or maſque, nor do his amuſements now require the ſuperintendance of a Maſter of the Revels.—Whilſt, therefore, the welfare of the ſtate claims the collective wiſdom of the Nobles and Gentlemen; and whilſt the defence of the Empire unſheaths each loyal ſword, it has become the province of the ſofter ſex, to regulate the elegancies of ſociety, vary the blandiſhments of faſhion, and prepare the repoſe and repaſt, which a life, devoted to arms, to arts, or to commerce, requires.

Thus we expect no more a Killigrew or a Rochester, but are eagerly pursuing the pleasure, which this Lady lures to a ball or a rout, or which that Duchess draws to a gala or a public *dejeûne*.

The Queen of Fashion, at the present period, was the Duchess of Derrington. Every one, as if by common consent, unanimously acknowledged the supremacy of her Grace, in the Empire of Fashion.

"What was the colour of the Duchess of Derrington's gloves, at Lady Susan's rout?" "What was the shape of the Duchess of Derrington's robe, at the drawing-room?" "Did the Duchess of Derrington wear powder?" "Who is this Mrs. Tenterdon, that gave such a gala yesterday? I don't know much about her, but, I suppose, she is somebody, as the Duchess of Derrington was there." Such was the constant echo of conversation

converſation among that claſs of people, whoſe voice confers faſhionable notoriety.

Poſſeſſing a moſt lively, and affable diſpoſition, the Ducheſs was the very Spirit of vivacity in every circle which ſhe honoured with her preſence. Yet ſhe was not entirely free from the pride of birth. She even added to that pride a poſitiveneſs of opinion, bordering on ſelf-conceit, as well in matters of the moſt frivolous, as the moſt important, nature. Theſe defects leſſened the circle of her real admirers, as ſhe would ſcarcely ever accede to an alteration of her ſentiments; and was too prone to treat with aſperity thoſe, who were ſufficiently independent to queſtion her judgment. Theſe foibles were, however, more than balanced by the genuine benevolence of her heart. The tenantry, around her country ſeats, bleſſed her

as

as the ſource of many domeſtic comforts, and the poor of the metropolis rejoiced when Winter drew to their aid the preſence and example of the Ducheſs of Derrington.

Nor was it to the diſtribution of common alms alone that her liberal mind attended.

In the walks of faſhionable life, many were the objects, who obtained from her, unfeigned commiſeration and the moſt delicate relief. Was a concert, a ball, a play, propoſed for the benefit of any worthy individual in need, her name was ever conſpicuous among the Patrons of genius in diſtreſs, or the Noble friends of unmerited misfortune. If it be ſaid that a love of notoriety, in ſome degree, inclined her to exhibit her name on ſuch occaſions, ſtill the active principle that prompted her to canvas from this noble

Noble perſonage, to that wealthy citizen, exerting the influence ſhe poſſeſſed, for the benefit of others, muſt be allowed to be a motive more honourable to her heart, than oſtentation; it was the benign impulſe of humanity.

The Duke, her huſband, a man of plain manners, and rather indolent habits, with a good will towards all the world, without caring much about any one in particular, left to her Grace the uncontrouled management of his immenſe revenues, and the free diſpoſal of her own time and company. Addicted himſelf to the pleaſures of the table and the chace, he paſſed a large portion of his time, at a favourite hunting ſeat, in the north, in the ſociety of a choſen few, whoſe minds and manners were ſimilar to his own. Eaſe, was the object of the Duke: variety and activity, the idols of the Ducheſs.

Thus

Thus every thing reſpecting the family eſtabliſhments was under the ſuperintendance of her Grace. The Ducheſs of Derrington's equipages—the Ducheſs of Derrington's liveries—the Ducheſs of Derrington's routes—and the Ducheſs of Derrington's daughters, were loudly praiſed in every drawing-room, and in every newſpaper every day; whilſt the Duke enjoyed as tranquil an obſcurity, as if the tomb of his anceſtors had already received him.—One object, and one only, both the Duke and Ducheſs purſued with equal zeal—the ſplendid ſettlement of their children. Their ſon, the Marquis of Leverton, had long been deſtined by both, as the huſband of Lady Julia.

Oceana, and her two noble friends, were ſeated together, and were taking a leiſurely, lounging ſort of breakfaſt, diſſecting the myſterious character of the

the Earl of Latimore, when the Ducheſs of Derrington was announced, and, in an inſtant, her Grace was in the room. "How d'ye do—how d'ye do?" cried her Grace, with the moſt unaffected eaſe imaginable, as ſhe entered the room. Obſerving Oceana, "I beg pardon; your people told me you were alone."

"Miſs Melville," ſaid Lady Julia, "a moſt dear and valuable friend of ours."

Ducheſs of D. "A moſt *intimate* friend, Lady Julia! A privy counſellor, I hope; for I came purpoſely to hold a council of ſcandal. Miſs Melville—Melville—I do not recollect the name. Have I ever before had the honour—"

Lady Amelia. "O never, never—certainly never; and ſo, if your Grace will allow me the pleaſure, I'll begin, and

and tell you the whole, true, full, and particular account of her life, character and behaviour, birth, parentage, and education."

Ducheſs of D. O, no, no, no—for mercy no. I have too many hundred things upon my hands to-day."

Lady Julia. " Amelia's as mad as ever you perceive. Your Grace may have heard of Captain Melville, a brother of Sir Richard Melville, of Somerſetſhire. My friend, Oceana, here, is his only child. He has been ſo generous as to ſpare her to us for the winter months."

Lady Amelia. And ſhe, diſintereſted ſoul, has been ſo generous as to prefer wintering amidſt the delights of the metropolis, to ſleeping away the ſeaſon, like a dormouſe, in a corner of South Wales."

Ducheſs

Duchefs of D. " Very well—very well, indeed; Miſs Melville and I muſt ſoon be better acquainted. Now then to buſineſs. Prepare for a ſurpriſe, my dear Ladies. Who do you think, in the name of every thing ridiculous, has announced a gala?—No leſs a perſonage than Mrs. Morley. Did you ever know any thing ſo ſhocking? The creature is, abſolutely, vulgar. Her huſband muſt have married her at ſome of thoſe ſhocking places, where the yellow fever makes women exceſſively ſcarce; for ſhe's egregiouſly ugly; is low-born, and had not a penny of fortune:- however, he's as rich as a jew, and ſhe has the unlimited controul of his purſe. Had the good woman ſatisfied herſelf with taking a houſe in Portland-Place; though it had been next door to one, I could have borne it. But you remember her airs laſt ſeaſon; every dreſs I wore—every carriage I ordered---the wretch

wretch ridiculed by her aukward imitations. Not content with this, ſhe attempted to give routes preciſely in the ſame ſtyle as myſelf. Even this I could have borne, but ſhe has carried her intolerable pride ſo far already, this ſeaſon, as to announce a gala on *the very ſame night with mine!* On the ſame night; could you have believed it?"

Lady Amelia. "But ſurely your Grace fears nothing from the competition."

Ducheſs of D. "Oh if I had but been apprized of her malice, it would have been a moſt glorious triumph! But, as it is, I could cry for vexation."

Lady Amelia. "Surely the Ducheſs of Derrington is not apprehenſive of a thin night becauſe Mrs. *Morley* gives a gala."

Ducheſs of D. "Worſe than that, my

my dear; I muſt really put it off.—The woman has, abſolutely, foreſtalled the three *indiſpenſables* of a gala! The PRINCE—The MORNING POST—and the BOW-STREET OFFICERS. Without theſe, what ſoul would come near me? Green Peas and Peaches would fail in attraction, even if they were twice as dear as they are. It is all over the town, that the Prince has promiſed to go; that circumſtance alone will carry a croud. Then, the hiring the Bow-ſtreet people begets the notion of an *exceſſive* croud; and you know all the world will be anxious for the honour of a ſqueeze. But beſpeaking the Morning Poſt, for the next day, carried the point. She has employed people to circulate the circumſtance, and it has had its full effect. Only conceive how I was mortified the other evening, at the opera. Lady Louiſa Lomley beckoned me over to her box." "Did you

you ever hear any thing ſo provoking," cried ſhe; "you know I promiſed your Grace for Thurſday, and now the ugly Mrs. Morley has gone, and beſpoke all the columns in the papers, and they ſay there'll be above five hundred names—What ſhall I do? You know ſhe ſent me a ticket. Shall I look in, and juſt get my name put down?"—"Now have not I the patience of Job, to endure all this; but let Mrs. Morley beware. The conſequence, my dear creatures, is, that I have been obliged to make a priſoner of my poor Mary, and circulate reports, that ſhe has been ſuddenly ſeized with a ſore throat and fever. I ſuppoſe you ſaw the paragraph."

Lady Julia. "No, upon my word; we have been goſſiping the whole noon away."

The newſpaper lay on the piano, and her

her Grace immediately pointed out the following paragraph:—

"In conſequence of the indiſpoſition of Lady Mary Derrington, the Faſhionable World are diſappointed in the Ducheſs's Gala, which was intended for Thurſday next. Some of the ſplendid dreſſes, which have been prepared for that occaſion, it is, however, ſuppoſed, will be ſported at Mrs. Morley's, of Portland-Place, who has cards out for that evening. The amiable Ducheſs is a cloſe priſoner to the ſick couch of her lovely daughter."

The pure heart of Oceana abſolutely revolted at this artifice of the Ducheſs. So unſkilled was ſhe in the School of Faſhion, that ſhe deemed that woman devoid of feeling, as well as deſtitute of truth, who could ſo ſportively affect affliction.

In

In the ſequel, the Ducheſs declared the purpoſe of her morning's viſit, which was, to entreat ladies Julia and Amelia, to exert all their influence over their brothers, and every one elſe in their power, to ſtay away from Mrs. Morley's; and to engage the whole family to meet her "darling," as ſhe termed the Marquis, her ſon, the following day, at dinner.

CHAP. V.

CHAP. V.

A Sleep-Walker.

AFTER the conferences, which took place between the Earl of Latimore and his brothers and ſiſters, on the day of his arrival, his whole time, for ſeveral ſucceeding days was occupied in an unremitting attention to ſtate-affairs.

Some changes among the members of adminiſtration, which were in agitation at this period, ſeemed to engroſs all the powers of his mind. Night after night was devoted to writing, and the entire day was ſpent in waiting on the leading perſons in power, or in giving

private audience at home, to men of the firſt conſideration in the ſtate.

Whilſt the Earl was thus laborioufly toiling on the road, marked out by his ambition, the other branches of the family, relieved from a painful anxiety, by the affection which he had evinced for them, entered more freely and with unmixed ſatisfaction, into the various purſuits and amuſements, which they had hitherto cautioufly adopted, or partially enjoyed. The Colonel, on wings of love, flew into Dorſetſhire, with the agreeable intelligence of his brother's generoſity, which enabled him inſtantly to offer to the object of his admiration, propoſals of marriage, ſuitable in every reſpect to the dignity of his own family, and that of the lady, who had long permitted him to hope, ſhe was far from indifferent to his addreſſes.

The

The Biſhop and the Captain remained in Berkley-ſquare. They were the conſtant companions of their ſiſters, whom they loved with ſincereſt affection.—The ſolid learning and manly intellect of the one, was admirably adapted to temper the good-humoured levity of the other; whoſe never-wearied gaiety relieved, on the other hand, the placid equanimity of temper, which characterized his brother.

Oceana, whom every one loved, was of courſe an object of attention and eſteem to the whole family.

Lovely in perſon, amiable in mind, her heart, her underſtanding, and her manners ſuch, as ſhould ever coincide with a beautiful exterior—how could it be otherwiſe? Wherever ſhe moved, ſhe won admiration by her charms and grace; nor did familiarity at all leſſen

that admiration. As the various traits of her character unfolded themſelves by progreſſive acquaintance, eſteem roſe gradually on the baſe of admiration, and *Oceana Melville* irreſiſtibly became an object of friendſhip to the diſcerning and the good.

She had now reſided about eight days with the Latimore Family; had entered, with innocent pleaſure, into the higher amuſements of the metropolis, and, excepting now and then, a recollection of her dependent ſtate, and the misfortunes of him, whom ſhe called father, ſhe was happy. An event, however, was near, which, in its conſequences, threatened to involve the ruin of her peace.

It happened one night, after the family had riſen from ſupper, and the uſual "Good night," had paſſed round the

the table, that Oceana went into the library to exchange a book, which she had been reading, for the following volume, intending to take it to her chamber, where she frequently employed an hour of the morning, in reading or writing, before the rest of the family appeared. She replaced the volume she had read, but the next was not in its place. She then searched for it sometime among those arranged on the shelves, but could no where discover it. Casting her eye round the room, she perceived eight or ten books lying confusedly together on the writing-table, near the fire place, where some embers of fire still glimmered. In proceeding to examine these books, she found they were foreign publications. Curiosity impelled her to look over them; and among them she found the interesting French novel, entitled "*Le Dot de Suzette.*"—She opened it. The first two or three

pages were attractive by a beautiful ſimplicity of ſtyle. She proceeded—the ſtory was promiſing—it pleaſed—it intereſted—and, at length, it faſcinated. She had peruſed ſeveral pages, ſtanding at the writing-table, entirely forgetful of her ſituation, when the clock ſtruck one—This aroufed her; yet ſhe heſitated to cloſe the book; her mind was perfectly awake to its intereſting pages, and ſhe, at length, determined to finiſh the romance before ſhe retired to reſt.

As ſhe never required her maid's aſſiſtance in undreſſing, and as ſhe was convinced the whole family had retired, ſhe reſolved to rekindle the dying embers of the fire, and to ſeat herſelf for an hour or two by its ſide.

In the execution of this reſolve, ſhe had nearly conſumed her candle, when

when the clock ſtruck three: ſtill perſevering however, in her determination, ſhe lit a taper, that ſtood on the table for the convenience of ſealing letters, and was proceeding in the ſtory, when the *ſound* of footſteps in the hall alarmed her. She liſtened—and was convinced that ſome one was actually approaching the library. She felt at the moment rather more ſhame than fear; for apt as was the hour for ſpectres, Oceana's mind never admitted an apprehenſion of them. She, therefore, inſtantly concluded that the Earl, or his Secretary, was coming to fetch ſome book or paper from the library, and ſhe bluſhed at the expoſure of her *novel-ſick paſſion*.

This perſuaſion ſoon vaniſhed.—A deep and anguiſh-breathing ſigh ſtruck her ear, and chilled her blood with horror.

Something like terror now really ſeized her. The door of the library opened, and the Earl of Latimore appeared.

A looſe night-gown was folded round him; his hair was untied and fell looſely on his ſhoulders. In his right hand he carried a candle, by the light of which his countenance was clearly diſtinguiſhable. It expreſſed a mixture of horror and regret. The fore finger of his left hand was placed upon his eye-brow, and he ſtood in an attitude of deep thought.

Oceana's terror was now converted into an undeſcribable ſenſation of horror; ſhe perceived that it was the mind alone of Lord Latimore, which was awake, directing the unconſcious movements of his limbs—he was walking in his ſleep. His eyes were uncloſed, yet

yet he ſaw nothing. They travelled with heavy, languid motion round the library, and then ſunk again on the floor. "No, no, not on the earth's wide ſurface can I find her," at length exclaimed the breathing ſpectre, and ſighed again moſt heavily.

He then walked paſt Oceana, who, almoſt overcome with horror and ſurpriſe, was about to quit the library, when the Earl's Swiſs ſervant, Durand, appeared. He was watching his maſter at a cautious diſtance, and intimated to Oceana, by ſigns, the neceſſity of her remaining ſtill and motionleſs. He beckoned her to extinguiſh her light, and to conceal herſelf behind a folding ſcreen. Relying on Durand's judgment, ſhe inſtantly complied.

Scarcely had ſhe obeyed, when the troubled ſpirit of this miſerable Noble-

man broke forth into these quick, incoherent and broken sentences.—" Oh faithless, faithless, cruel Olivia! But I punished him—Yes, yes, this arm, Olivia, this arm has laid him low—I slew your Mortimer. Now his spirit haunts me night and day.—Mortimer, I say, away. Why burst your coffin, thus to come, dressed in a bloody winding sheet, to court?—What has the King to do, Mortimer, with your wounds? Why seat yourself, in my chair, at the council-board?—Fiend, I say, away: thou shalt not cross my purpose, I will be all but—King. I tell you, Mortimer---you have no business at the council: you are a skeleton.—My Lords, it is his ambition to be Chancellor. Preposterous folly!—What could you do with the seals in your coffin? Hush—if you tell these Lords, that I—that Latimore, did such a deed

—hush—

—hush---hush---I say. Go, go, you, smell of the church-yard.—Why don't some one turn him out? What---can you suffer a skeleton to approach the King? See the earth-worms are dropping from those holes where his eyes were. See---see---he guides the King's hand to sign the death-warrant of a murderer. Mercy, Gracious Sire.---Hold, hold---I beseech your Majesty, give me the fatal pen. Ah! Horror, horror---a crawling worm has twined itself around the pen. I cannot shake it off: it is cold as an icicle. Its touch chills my blood—I freeze—I freeze—help, help!!"

As he spoke his teeth chattered. The candle, which he held in his hand, fell on the floor, and his whole frame became convulsed. In the same instant his eyes flashed with awakened sense, and Durand, who watched the crisis,

caught him in his arms, and conveyed him to his chamber.

Oceana, who had been a trembling auditor of the unhappy nobleman, now ſtole from her place of concealment, and returned the taper. What ſhe had beheld, and what ſhe had heard, had removed from her mind all deſire of finiſhing the novel, and ſhe inſtantly returned to her chamber.

Late as was the hour, the agitated ſtate of her mind prevented ſleep from reſting on her eye-lids. Her thoughts buſied themſelves with the formation of endleſs conjectures on the meaning of the Earl's incoherent ſoliloquy. For though ſhe was ready to allow that it was no more than the effect of an idle dream; yet, that there is a moſt powerful connexion between our ſleeping and our waking thoughts, ſhe was convinced.

vinced, and ſhe had often heard the echo of Shakſpeare's admirable expreſſion, "*that murder, though it has no tongue, doth ſpeak by moſt miraculous organs.*" Of Mortimer, or of Olivia, ſhe had never heard before, but that both were intimately connected with the cauſe of Earl Latimore's diſquietude, whatever that cauſe might be, ſhe felt perſuaded; and that his horrid dreams were not unfrequent, was evident, from the circumſtance of his ſervant conſtantly ſleeping in his chamber. She compared all that ſhe had been told of this myſterious Nobleman with what ſhe had this night ſeen and heard, and the concluſion from that compariſon, in ſpite of charity, was greatly unfavourable to her eſtimation of his character. While her mind was thus full of her ſubject, ſhe took up her pen, and, ere ſhe cloſed her eyes, committed all that

that she knew, and all that she had heard, to paper, in a letter to the worthy old Melville.

CHAP. VI.

CHAP. VI.

An Injunction.

ON the following morning, as Oceana was croſſing the ſaloon to the breakfaſt parlour, ſhe was ſurpriſed to obſerve the Earl walking, ſeemingly in deep contemplation. She had only once or twice been in his company, and had never yet entered into direct converſation with him. The adventure of the preceding night was far from encouraging her to addreſs him now, but it was impoſſible to avoid him. As ſhe approached him, Lord Latimore ſtarted, but inſtantly recovering his compoſure of appearance, he held out his hand to her, and with a ſort of half ſmile on his countenance, addreſſed her with the uſual ſalutation of early meeting. After

terwhich, with the ſame ſort of ſmile ſtill hovering on his lips, "Will Miſs Melville," ſaid he, "after the ſtrange rencontre of laſt night, venture herſelf alone with me for a few minutes?"—Oceana anſwered by a ſlight inclination of the head, and the Earl led her to his ſtudy. Having placed a chair for her, and locked the door of the ſtudy with that ceremonious ſolemnity, that ſeemed the preface to an important interview, he ſeated himſelf oppoſite to her, and fixed his penetrating eyes upon her countenance. "It is unneceſſary, Miſs Melville, ſaid he, to obſerve, that I have learnt from my attendant, the circumſtances of laſt night. I underſtand that you were a witneſs of the dreadful effects of a malady, to which I have long been a miſerable victim. It is an old obſervation, you know, that no man is a great man to his Valet de chambre; or, in other words,

words, every man, however idolized by the many, either for talents, power or wealth, bears about him, in his compoſition, ſome imperfections, ſome ugly flaws, that make the idol feel he is but man: and, however, much the ſplendour, that iſſues from any ſpecies of exaltation, may dazzle the ſight of diſtant gazers, and render ſpots to them inviſible; yet who is there among the moſt envied of mankind, that has not, in ſome unguarded moment, exhibited to thoſe around him, infirmities, that crave, at leaſt, the pity, if they do not challenge the contempt, even of the humbleſt menial in his train.

"For my own part, I feel, very ſenſibly, the humiliating fact. Me, the world deems an object of its envy.—They know me wealthy, and poſſeſſed of power; they ſee me, ſurrounded with all the ſplendour of rank and fortune;

tune; and they call me happy. What would they think, were they admitted to ſuch exhibitions of human weakneſs, and human miſery, as my valet has beheld an hundred times, and which laſt night Miſs Melville was ſpectator of.

"There have now more than twenty years gone by ſince the memorable events of one unhappy hour, inflicted on this heart a wound, whoſe ulcerating ſores have poiſoned the whole ſyſtem of my exiſtence, impregnating each following moment of my life with miſery incurable!" The anguiſh which the Earl felt as he uttered the laſt ſentence, in ſpite of his efforts to ſuppreſs it, ſtarted into tears. He roſe from his chair, and walked ſeveral times acroſs the ſtudy, holding his handkerchief to his face, whilſt Oceana, embarraſſed beyond deſcription, knew not whether it were better to interrupt his ſorrows, or to remain ſilent. In

In a few minutes, however, he recovered himſelf, again took his ſeat, and reſumed.—" Such ſcenes as this, Miſs Melville, Durand, my valet, often ſees, but they affect him no more, than does the ſtate of wretched maniacs their callous keepers. On your heart, however, I perceive, that the tears of miſery do not fall without impreſſion. I hail, with ſatisfaction, ſuch a token of your ſenſibility, and augur from the ſympathy you thus evince, the willingneſs of your diſpoſition to alleviate the ſufferings you commiſerate."

" Oh, beyond all doubt, my Lord," exclaimed Oceana, " only acquaint me how I may render myſelf ſo happy."

" You ſhall learn," replied the Earl. " When firſt this ſtrange diſorder of the mind attacked me, I was at Vienna, on buſineſs of the State. I lodged at the houſe

houſe of a Noble German, who was my father's friend. One night my hoſt, who ſlept in an apartment adjoining to my own, was alarmed by an uncommon noiſe, and ſeeming altercation, in my chamber. He aroſe, and came to know the cauſe, when he perceived me, though aſleep, armed with a drawn ſword, in the very act of piercing the tapeſtry with which the room was hung; and at the ſame time uttering exclamations, which indicated the diſordered ſtate of my mind. Naturally alarmed, he rung for the aſſiſtance of his domeſtics. I awoke to horror at the ſight of my ſword fixed in the tapeſtry, and ſeveral people, with terror in their countenances, ſtaring at a ſuppoſed madman. I ruſhed into my bed, overcome with ſhame and horror. My friend ſoon diſcovered that it was the effect of a dream which had thus forcibly operated on me, and in the morning ſtrongly

ſtrongly urged the neceſſity of ſome perſon's watching, for the future, in my chamber. The only objection to this precaution was, a conviction, that I very frequently ſpoke aloud in my ſleep, and conſequently a fear that I might repeat confidential converſations, or divulge the contents of letters, neceſſarily ſecret. Yet the hazard of committing miſchief in my ſleep on others, or myſelf, demanded ſome ſuch watch. It happened that the Count, my friend, had juſt then, from motives of compaſſion, taken into his domeſtic eſtabliſhment, a young Swiſs ſoldier, from his own regiment of Huſſars. This young ſoldier was, Durand, who though uncommonly athletic and robuſt, had become deaf from the effects of a ſevere cold. This very misfortune, which diſqualified him for the ſervice of the Emperor, was his qualification for my ſervice, and he has ever ſince that period remained

remained with me. He is as faithful a machine as I could have wiſhed to meet with, and I certainly owe my life to his care.

"Now, Miſs Melville, will it not ſtrike you as a ſingular fact, that during the ſpace of more than twenty years, in which period ſcarcely a night has paſſed without ſome ſuch ſcene as that of yeſternight, not one individual has ever witneſſed my humiliating malady, except Durand and,—YOU!"

As he pronounced the word YOU, he ſeized the hand of Oceana, with a wildneſs in his looks and air, that alarmed her. Nor did the progreſs of his addreſs leſſen the embarraſſment of her ſituation.

Ere ſhe recovered from her ſurpriſe, the Earl continued, ſhaking her by the hand,

hand, as he held it claſped between his own---"Tell me then candidly, Madam, were you the afflicted one that I am, had undergone tormenting dreams, like mine, and were appriſed, that in your ſleep you uttered ſentences, and performed actions like one awake---would you not feel a devouring anxiety to know, how far ſuch words and actions correſponded with the horrid thoughts and viſions, that drove you ſleeping from your couch? Go on to ſuppoſe, that he who nightly watched you, and ſaw horror and anguiſh pictured in your face, beheld the motion of your lips, yet that he had never heard the words which paſſed them. Imagine further, that by accident, or, if you will, by fate, a moment comes at length, when your guard ſleeps; you wander, unconſcious, to a ſpot, where, by the ſame concurring fate, a liſtener ſits at an uſual hour.—You are beheld, and you are overheard; not

not by a friend, but by a ſtranger. Anſwer me now--how would you wiſh ſuch an interloper into the ſecrets of your breaſt to act by you? Make all this caſe your own, and your own heart will teach you, how you can ſerve me, how much you can alleviate the affliction, which you ſeem to pity. Does not your heart ſuggeſt to you my feelings? This ſecret malady, which with ſuch anxious care I have concealed, even from my deareſt friends, and neareſt relatives, fate has ordained that you ſhould witneſs. Firſt then, tell me, with the ſincerity of a ſecond conſcience, what aſpect I aſſumed, and what expreſſions paſſed my lips; and next, ſwear to the Eternal, that never ſhall the words you heard, or the ſight you witneſſed, be made known, by you, to any mortal being."

Oceana, who had liſtened with a painful

painful attention to the Earl, now felt herſelf compelled to make ſome reply. Yet ſo ſingularly embaraſſing was her ſituation, that ſhe was entirely at a loſs in what manner to deliver her ſentiments.

Perceiving this embarraſſment, Lord Latimore, with the deſign of leſſening it, and at the ſame time to cover his own anxiety, attempted to aſſume a more calm and tranquil deportment.

"After all" reſumed he, "I am aware, Miſs Melville, that what appears of ſo much importance to me, and what I conſider as ſo heavy a calamity, may appear to you as nothing ſo very ſingular:—You have, perhaps, ſeen perſons walking in their ſleep before."

"No, really, my Lord, never."

"Then that, perhaps, accounts for the terror, which, Durand informs me, you expreſſed at the ſight. Was it the novelty,—the ſurpriſe, that ſo much alarmed you? Or—was there in my appearance any thing ſo very frightful? Was it, as Hamlet ſays—"A countenance in ſorrow or in anger?" Come, anſwer me, candidly, now."

"Indeed, my Lord, I think neither ſorrow nor anger were ever ſo depicted, as you appeared."

"What paſſion or emotion of the ſoul then, in your opinion, did it moſt reſemble."

"Really, my Lord, I am not able to deſcribe it. It was, I think, a mixture of Diſappointment, Horror and Revenge."

"Indeed.!!!

"Indeed. !!! Well,---go on, Madam."

"From your appearance, I conjecture that your dream muſt have been very terrible."

"And ſo it was---it was a horrid dream indeed. Even the confuſed remembrance of it ſhakes my nerves!"

"No wonder then, my Lord, that your face was the emblem of Horror! ---or, that your exclamations were ſo dreadful!"

"Why,---what, what exclamation did I utter? Tell me."

As he ſpake, his eyes ſparkling with the fierceneſs of enquiry, rivetted themſelves on Oceana.

"You ſpoke of graves and winding-ſheets; of bleeding corpſes, and of ſkeletons, haunting the very council-chamber of the king."

"Hold!" cried the Earl in an agony, ſtriking his forehead with his hand, and ſtarting from his ſeat. After a ſhort pauſe —"Don't torment me, child," cried he, "the dream of night becomes the waking viſion of the day, and I ſhall ſee the monſter in reality."

Oceana was alarmed at the wildneſs of his words and manner.

"Oh, if ſuch ſhadows of the brain," continued he, "can thus appal a man, ---if thus a ſickly mind can ſpread diſeaſe over the whole tenement of frail humanity, better the building fall!"

Recollecting himſelf---"Excuſe, excuſe

cuſe this weakneſs,---I am a child, or weaker than a child, I think. Proceed. If there is any connected ſentence, that you remember, repeat it if you pleaſe, nor heed the ſtrange effect it may produce on me. My diſorder is of a ſingular caſt---inexplicable, perhaps, as it is incurable. Pray, proceed, madam.---Stay. I remember that, in my dream, I had a conteſt with a villain, who had, in ſome way or other, aimed to deſtroy my honour, and as I think, I---"

"Yes," interrupted Oceana, "yes, my Lord, I remember perfectly well, that with a kind of horrid triumph, you ſaid, "The villain, Mortimer,---I ſlew him---"

"Infamous ſlanderer! Liar.!" exclaimed the Earl, ſtamping his foot on the floor with violence.

Oceana trembled and turned pale.

Lord Latimore, in an inſtant, recovered his recollection.

" Pardon me, pardon me, Madam. But you have pronounced a name, that has the force of ſorcery upon my brain: and you have coupled it with a charge of ——Oh God, what am I ſaying,---whither will buſy imagination lead me? Why not ſay on---Why not diſcloſe *all* that you heard this babbling tongue diſcloſe? Fix on me at once, the lightning of your conſcious eyes, and tell me, that you know me, and will proclaim me---for a murderer! "

The vehemence and painful force of feeling, with which he uttered this addreſs, exhauſted his ſtrength, and he ſunk, almoſt fainting, on a chair.

Oceana

Oceana, alſo, overcome with horror and aſtoniſhment, was yet aroufed by the apparent ſenſeleſs ſtate of the Earl, and ſummoning her ſpirits to her aid, ſhe approached him, and with great preſence of mind, ſaid,—

"Oh, my Lord, you are ill, very ill. Permit me to call your ſervant. Your agitation overpowers you---you know not what you ſay. Indeed, my Lord, you are not well. Let the kind looks of your ſiſters ſooth your troubled mind: their affectionate attentions will ſoon efface the horrid images which your dream has engendered. Think, my Lord, it is merely a *dream* that haunts you, and do not let a noble mind, like yours, be harraſſed thus by ſhadows."

"Only a dream! Only a dream! ſay you, child! Why true. But then,

good God, how near allied are the effects of reality and imagination in this ſtrange frame---Humanity!

" Had I been, indeed, that thing, which my diſtempered mind pictured me to myſelf, I ſhould not have ſhrunk with more cowardly feeling from your eye. You have ſeen my terrors!---and how are you to diſtinguiſh the ſource of them, from fancy or reality?

" Muſt I not always wear, in your eſtimation, the ſemblance of a guilty Man :---and can you then otherwiſe regard me?"

" Diſcard ſuch idle thoughts pray, my Lord. You attach importance to mere nothings. According to your logic, we ſhould pay homage to every clown who dreams he is a Monarch."

The

The artifice of Oceana ſucceeded. The Earl replied---

" You argue admirably :---and if this diſeaſe of mine had not ſo deeply wormed itſelf, as it were, into my heart, I think you excellently well qualified to remedy its effects. "

" How happy ſhould I deem myſelf, if the pleaſure of ſuch a cure were to fall to my lot, " ſaid Oceana, " and ſuffer me to hope, that the ſingular accident, by which I have been made acquainted with your malady, is a prognoſtic that it ſhall be ſo."

" In ſpite of my conviction to the contrary, you almoſt induce me to believe it poſſible."

" Oh cheriſh ſuch perſuaſion, my Lord, and the cure is half accompliſhed. Suffer

Suffer me to ſay, that no endeavour ſhall be wanting. I have often, my Lord, ſpent hours in the taſk of ſoothing the anguiſh that has preyed upon a loved father's mind. I have experienced the rapture of ſeeing him ſmile, and oh, how amply was I rewarded! And I am ſure I ſhould feel the ſame joy, if I could court to your preſence a ſmile!"

There appeared an enchantment in the melody of Oceana's voice, or in her words, which made the Earl her ſlave. His paſſions, powerful in the extreme, were apparently ſubdued; his reaſon, ſtrong as, perhaps, was ever human being's, ſeemed ſubjugated by her power; and his will, domineering as the moſt powerful deſpot's, in this inſtance, bowed before her's.

"You almoſt make me forget myſelf, already,"

already," cried he, "but it muſt not be. Whatever elſe of this adventure may be idle phantaſy, there is a reality in the name you uttered; and there are real events connected with it, the memory of which will for ever mar my peace. You ſaw the agony I endured; again and again I ſhall dream of this wretch; and again ſhall be tortured with his horrible form. Why do I exiſt? Is it not better that a man eſcape at once from ſuch phantoms as theſe?—What glory can compenſate for ſuch hours of miſery and horror? What, if I gain the very ſummit of my high ambitious hopes: what, if my councils guide that ſceptre I aſpire to guide, and I become, in eſſence, the ruler of my country, will the full graſp of power give me the ſmalleſt influence in the mind's dominion? Alas, No. And then the riſk of being known to be the thing I am—the ſcared victim of a ſhadow forming

malady. Doomed, perhaps, to hear fools whiſpering one another as they paſs me—"There, that's he that cannot ſleep o'nights. See, that's the poor Earl Latimore, whoſe conſcience will not let him reſt. They ſay that he ſees ſpectres in his dreams!" Then will they ſhake their ſapient heads, and cry—"God bleſs them," and "thank God that *they* ſleep quiet in their beds!"

The tender heart of Oceana wept inwardly for the diſtracted object, that ſtood before her. Surpriſed, terrified, horror-ſtricken, as ſhe was, ſtill pity glowed within her boſom, and ſhe ſtudied how to ſooth the very anguiſh that alarmed her.

"Let me beſeech your Lordſhip," ſaid ſhe, with tenderneſs, "to think no more of what occurred laſt night. Be it as it never been. In my own breaſt the

the ſecret of your grief ſhall reſt ſilent, as though it never had been known to me: be aſſured, my Lord, it ſhall."

"Nay, think not Madam, that I ſhall truſt ſo lightly to your faith. If I ſhall decide ſtill to endure exiſtence, it will be with pains and jealouſies, which you muſt henceforth ſhare with me; and if I die, you muſt accompany me to thoſe ſhades, that ſhall for ever hide the ſecret of laſt night. At that portentous moment, when your Fate led you to the ſcene of yeſternight, at that moment did my Fate unite to yours.

"Whatever good or ill, and all the good and evil that was ordained, from the firſt birth of time, to mingle in the deſtiny of Latimore; from that event to his expiring moment, was ordained for you. One Fate alone is ours!—And that no common deſtiny! Hereafter

after we will diſcourſe upon particulars. For the preſent, all that I am reſolved upon is, that you ſolemnly ſwear in the name of that Eternal Eſſence, which fills all ſpace, ſwear that you have not revealed, to eye or ear of mortal, ought that you heard or ſaw laſt night."

Oceana trembled!—" My Lord, I have not ſeen ſince then a human face, except yours and your ſervant's.

" Confirm it by the oath!" " Willingly—I ſwear it" " Thus far, I am ſecure then; and, for the future, Lady, ſwear by the ſame myſterious and holy Eſſence, that no circumſtance, however critical; no tortures, however racking to the mind or body, ſhall ever draw the ſecret of that hour from your boſom. Swear that no indication, even that you have a ſecret which concerns Earl Latimore,

more, ſhall ever, by hazard or deſign, eſcape you. Yes, by hazard, I repeat, for you muſt ſo ſhackle every future look and geſture with ſtrict caution, that the chance ſhall be impoſſible. Swear this and live."

Under the influence of exiſting circumſtances, Oceana deemed it cruelty to augment his ſufferings by oppoſition. She conſidered it as an oath to which, no moral obligation could attach, as it wanted the ſanction which can alone render an oath ſacred—her will.

" I ſwear it," ſaid ſhe. " Enough.—So may your ſoul know healthful peace or torturing diſeaſe, as you are true or perjured! Go now, mix with my family. I know, child, that you will not meet them with the ſame light heart that you were wont to do. I ſee the chain, the galling chain around you, that

that, to all others, is invifible. But, remember, I did not forge thefe fetters for your thoughts and actions; they are the gifts of Fate; and the manner in which I fhall perceive you wear them will influence all the future of our common lot. Stay not to reply at prefent; leave me."

Oceana retired to her chamber.

No fooner was fhe alone than the moft melancholy train of thought fucceeded the agitation of her mind. The folemn injunction of fecrecy, under which fhe muft henceforth labour in the fociety of her friends, now appeared to her imagination as an evil of no common magnitude. The Earl of Latimore's future conduct was another fource of melancholy contemplation. She perceived the true ftate of his mind. It was noble, in every fenfe of that comprehenfive

comprehenſive expreſſion, but it was, nevertheleſs, diſeaſed. Whatever might be the cauſe, it was evident that he was miſerable; and however artificial appearances of happineſs might impoſe upon others, Oceana, henceforth, knew him to be wretched.

That his miſery ſprung from ſome event connected with the name of Mortimer, was alſo plain, but the nature of that event was, at preſent, ſhrouded from her knowledge. Yet ſhe thought, "The time may not be diſtant, when the preſent painful uncertainty may be exchanged for yet more painful knowledge. The tale, when told, may even ſurpaſs the horrid image of common murder, which my mind already cheriſhes, and my future peace may, perhaps, be for ever ruined by the forced concealment of unexampled guilt."

At

At this moment the recollection of having mentioned the adventure of laſt night in her letter to Captain Melville, induced her to agitate the queſtion, how far ſhe ought to abide by ſuch an oath, as ſhe had taken, in oppoſition to the impulſe of filial duty and affection, which had hitherto ever prompted her to place the moſt unlimited confidence in her loved father's boſom. Thus ſhe argued:—

"There has yet occurred no queſtion, in which his advice can influence my choice. What I have written can ſerve only to awaken curioſity, without tending to any uſeful purpoſe. For the preſent then, at leaſt, I will comply unreſervedly with the wiſhes of this unhappy Nobleman. I will deſtroy my letter, and wait the further progreſs of this adventure, ere I determine upon the propriety of abiding implicitly by the condition of

of an oath, extorted under ſuch circumſtances of terror and commiſeration."

Her determination was too late. The letter, which ſhe had ſealed and placed upon her toilette the preceding night, had been removed whilſt ſhe was with the Earl, packed up in a parcel, and forwarded to a friend, agreeably to her own former order.

The queſtion was thus determined by Fate. She had not violated her oath, and yet the ſecret was, in part, diſcloſed.

CHAP. VII

CHAP. VII.

A Maſked Gala.

THREE or four days now paſſed away, the principal portion of which was devoted, by Oceana and her friends, to preparations for their attendance at the Maſked Ball, or, as it was termed, the Gala, which had been ſo long announced by the Ducheſs of Derrington. In this interval no private communication had taken place between Earl Latimore and Oceana, but he had evidently ſacrificed ſome hours to the domeſtic circle, and had taken ſeveral opportunities of drawing Oceana into particular converſations, on various ſubjects, with the view of aſcertaining the bias of her mind, and the compaſs of her underſtanding.

ſtanding. Convinced, from his own obſervation, that ſhe was many degrees above the ordinary level of her ſex, he felt a conſiderable dimunition of the mortification and anxiety, which her diſcovery of his ſecret miſery had at firſt occaſioned. Still, however he felt, that his mind was expoſed to her in its naked deformity, and the remembrance of ſuch a degradation was painful to his pride.

The attentions which he paid to her did not eſcape the obſervations of the family. Julia and Amelia rejoiced at the circumſtance. Ignorant of the true cauſe of ſuch a ſeeming preference, they attributed it entirely to the diſcernment of their brother, and the merits of their friend; and overlooking the diſparity of their years, their fortunes, and their ranks, they flattered themſelves, that it was a preference which might, at no very

very diſtant period, add the name of Siſter to that of Friend, in the perſon of their Oceana.

Theſe ſurmiſes were rather ſtrengthened than diſcouraged, when the morning of the Ducheſs of Derrington's night arrived, and Lord Latimore ſignified his intention of attending them, at her Grace's, at the ſame time obſerving, in a ſtrain of gallantry, wholly foreign to his general deportment, "that the movements of Miſs Melville ſo powerfully influenced his own, he was conſtrained to own himſelf her mere ſatellite, whom the laws of Fate had doomed to follow the evolutions of its maſter planet."

Oceana, however, conſtrued the meaning of this apparent compliment much nearer to the truth. She felt its force, and ſighed.

Evening

Evening arrived.

Important engagements at Council preventing the Earl from accompanying the party to the Ducheſs's, he took memorandums of their dreſſes, and promiſed to join them there as early as poſſible.

The party, conſiſting of Ladies Julia and Amelia, the former habited as a Nun, and the latter, as Diana; Oceana, as a Virgin of the Sun; the Captain, as a Dutch Sailor; and the Biſhop, in a Domino, proceeded, about eleven, to Derrington-houſe, which was, at that moment, the ſplendid Temple of Wit, Taſte, Pleaſure, and Magnificence.

The Entrance-hall was metamorphoſed into a garden of rare and coſtly exotics, which impreſſed the mind with admiration, and delighted the ſenſes by their

their beauty and their odour. Sparkling lamps of every colour, ſeemed dancing among the ſhrubs and trees, through which an avenue was formed, that led to the foot of the grand ſtair-caſe. On the ſeveral reſting places of the ſtairs, were groupes of lovely girls and boys, habited in ſtrict *coſtume*, as Savoyards, who welcomed the approaching gueſts with the livelieſt airs and choruſſes. The principal Gallery was converted into a moſt ſuperb temple, after the deſign of the magnificent ſcene of the Temple of the Sun, painted for the play of Pizarro, at Drury Lane Theatre. This was the chief promenade for the Characters and Dominos.

The Drawing-room and Anti-rooms were thrown into one, and formed a temporary Supper-room. This room was a blaze of ſplendour, ſoftened to the eye of taſte by the moſt judicious arrangements of its magnificent decorations.

tions. The tables were covered with ſervices of gold and ſilver plate, containing every luxury which voluptuous fancy could ſuggeſt and princely opulence procure.

But the apartment on which her Grace of Derrington, and her daughters, aided by Ladies Julia and Amelia Latimore, had expended the principal portion of their time, and the united efforts of their taſte and fancy, was the grand ſaloon, which was appropriated to the votaries of Terpſichore.

The ſcene here ſeemed actually the creation of enchantment. The pencils of ſome of the firſt artiſts had been employed upon the temporary walls and cielings. Mirrors of immenſe ſize reflected back the ſplendour of an hundred brilliantly illuminated chandeliers. Tranſparencies of exquiſite deſign and

workmanſhip, were ſuſpended by wreaths of artificial flowers, between ſlender columns of ſilver, on which were pendant appropriate inſignia of the mirthful temple.

At each end of the Saloon floated a moſt beauteous cloud; on one of which reclined the goddeſs Terpſichore —on the other, the god Apollo: behind theſe clouds bands of muſic were concealed, and the enrapturing ſounds which iſſued from inviſible inſtruments, completed the enchanting deluſion of the ſcene.

Early as was the hour, according to the dial of faſhion, the rooms were beginning to be *moſt deliciouſly crouded*, as a maſk, in the character of a Flower-Girl, obſerved, when the Latimore Party arrived. They had juſt paid their reſpects to the Ducheſs, when a general

general buzz of ſatisfaction announced the arrival of the Prince. At that moment, he entered the temple unmaſked.

He was ſupported by two gentlemen in black dominos. With that inexpreſſible union of dignity and affability, which at once indicates the noble mind of a prince and the poliſhed manners of a gentleman, he entered into converſation with the Ducheſs, who was, alſo, unmaſked.

Her Grace, who had expreſſed a particular kindneſs for Oceana, with peculiar condeſcenſion, ſtudied to render the ſcene entertaining to her pupil, as ſhe termed her. She deſcribed the various characters as they paſſed her, nodding and whiſpering themſelves into her notice.

The Latimore party kept as near to

each other as the croud permitted them. As they were promenading the temple, the ſame Flower-Girl, who had paſſed them on their entrance, ran up to the Ducheſs, who was walking with Oceana, and exclaimed—"Oh lord how charming! I was never half ſo delightfully aſtoniſhed! You attractive creature, you! What a croud! There is not a corner to ſtand in. I never was ſo delightfully elevated in my life! My dear Ducheſs, why don't you have a night every week. I declare I don't think there could be more people, if they paid for their tickets—do you? But pray, who is that lovely creature your Grace has taken into favour? Everybody ſays ſhe muſt be a *monſtrous* favourite, becauſe her dreſs is ſo *monſtrous apropos* to the Temple of the Sun, —that ſhe *muſt* have been in the ſecret."

"You

"You are a *monſtrous bore*" cried a maſk, in a black domino, who followed the party. "Oh you brute—I know you," replied the voluble Flower-Girl. "Lord its the extreme of the ridiculous in *you* to attempt maſking, Charles, for you know you carry the odour of a ſtable, and the language of a groom, wherever you go:—there, take that." —The young lady then threw a roſe at her Charles and tripped lightly away. Charles purſued her.

"Admirable pair" exclaimed the Ducheſs, in a whiſper to Oceana.— "The Flower-Girl is the widow of an Iriſh peer: ſhe is remarkably handſome, remarkably ſilly, and remarkably rich. Her Charles, is the youngeſt ſon of a deceaſed citizen; and is like Lady Luſtre, remarkably rich and remarkably ſilly. Her Ladyſhip is the beſt *rope-ſkipper* we have, and Charles Scavenge

is allowed to be unrivalled in driving a *tandem*. Precious pair!"

At this inſtant, the Prince and his two companions, were approaching the Ducheſs.

"He on the right of the Prince" obſerved the Biſhop to Oceana, "is the junior Meriton, a young man deſervedly high in the eſtimation of the firſt companies, from his ſuavity of manners and his brilliant accompliſhments. He is a favourite of the Prince, and the patronage is equally creditable to the talents of the one and the diſcerning liberality of the other.

"Do you know the Domino on the left of the Prince?" continued the Biſhop, addreſſing himſelf to the Ducheſs. "I believe a mother may ſay, ſhe knows her own child," ſaid her Grace with

with a ſmile; "It is the Marquis of Leverton, and I inſiſt, my Lord, that as a proteſtant biſhop, you will now exert your powers of eloquence over the cold ſcruples of this fair nun, your ſiſter: and ſhould the arguments of chriſtianity fail, I muſt entreat my little heathen divinity here, the chaſte Diana herſelf, to intercede for my poor "Darling."—Nay, the Virgin of the Sun muſt for once plead the cauſe of love and conſtancy!"

Amelia, with innocent archneſs, added to the embarraſſment of her ſiſter, by entering fully into the wiſhes of the Ducheſs; whilſt her Grace, who was already characterized as a "*Match-Maker*," with the broadeſt hints, introduced the Marquis of Leverton to Lady Julia, and placed her under his protection.—The Prince walked with Amelia; and young Meriton entered into converſation with Oceana. As

As they were thus *promenading*, they were ſtopped by a character, very excellently dreſſed, as an Aſtrologer.—Bowing reverently to the Prince, he addreſſed him thus:—"Hail to the illuſtrious Prince, the portentous ſtar of whoſe nativity glowed on theſe aged eyes, and gave the inner man to know the fate of empires in that hour's deſtiny!"

"Marvellous man!" ſaid young Meriton. "And is it to the ſtars that you are indebted for the aſtoniſhing talent of diſcovering what is not attempted to be concealed." Alluding to the Prince's being unmaſked.

"Babbler of witticiſms, hold!" exclaimed the Aſtrologer. "Learn that *thou*, though concealed, and thy father, though abſent, are known unto me.—He is eloquent in the ſenate, and his wit

wit is unrivalled, but his eloquence cannot influence the decifions of Fate, nor the charms of his wit for one moment arreft the bufy motion of the Heavens. He himfelf would acknowledge, though almoft omnipotent with weapons of ridicule, yet even he would confefs, that there are fublimities in nature, which all but fools and dæmons hallow!"

"Bravo! Bravo!" cried young Meriton, not a little chagrined. "Upon my honor, Kemble could not have declaimed with better emphafis. I won- who it is——"

"The wonder will laft, replied the Aftrologer, "for none know me, tho' I know all. My bufinefs is not with you; but thus much of *your* future deftiny you may take *gratis*. Cultivate the Virtues with half the fuccefs that you have ftudied the Graces, and you will

hereafter be as much honoured by the GOOD, as you now are flattered by the GREAT."

"Who can it poſſibly be," ſaid Meriton. "Pray, ſir, are you the Wiſe Man of the Eaſt, or the Wandering Jew, or a Travelling Conjuror—or—?"

With an air of diſdain, the Aſtrologer turned from him, and addreſſed the ladies.

"Fair daughters of the Houſe of Latimore, hear wiſdom!—The knowledge of the deſtiny of your illuſtrious Houſe has been, through many an anxious day and ſleepleſs night, the object of my enquiring contemplation. You have a brother who——"

"Pſha," interrupted young Meriton; this is too much."

"Its

"'Tis not a bad character," obſerved the Prince, "but carried a little too far perhaps."

The Aſtrologer bowed reverently to the Prince, and, apparently, from reſpect to him, deſiſted, and ſuffered the party to proceed.

The rapid change of characters that now paſſed and repaſſed them, ſoon effaced the image of the old Aſtrologer from the remembrance of every one but Oceana. On her mind the laſt words of that ſingular character had made an indelible impreſſion. The broken ſentence—"*You have a brother who*" ſtill ſounded, ſolemnly as it was uttered, in her ears:—and the combination of horrid ideas that took place in her mind, precluded from her obſervation all the puppetry of the characters around her, and caſt a gloom over that blaze of ſplendour, which dazzled and delighted all other eyes.

Inattentive to the compliments, the obſervations, and even the railleries of young Meriton, ſhe preſerved an unbroken ſilence till ſhe found herſelf in the room, appropriated to the dancers, arouſed from thought by the briſk notes of the pipe and tabor.

"You intend to dance, of courſe, Miſs Melville," ſaid Meriton. "May I hope for the honour of your hand?"

Oceana was embarraſſed. She had indeed promiſed herſelf much pleaſure from dancing, but her mind was now ſo much depreſſed by the remembrance of her interview with Lord Latimore, which ſhe had connected in her mind with the ſingular expreſſions of the Aſtrologer, that it was by no means a pretence, when ſhe pleaded ſudden indiſpoſition, and requeſted her excuſe. Julia and Amelia, ignorant of the cauſe

of

of her indiſpoſition, were extremely alarmed at it, and kindly propoſed retiring on her account. This ſacrifice Oceana reſolutely reſiſted, and ſummoning her ſpirits, aſſured them, that in the ſecond or third dance ſhe ſhould be able to join them, if they would allow her the pleaſure of being a ſpectator of the firſt.

The Ducheſs was too much engaged by that diviſion of her attentions, ſo neceſſary to give general ſatisfaction in ſo large a party, to be able to particularize the ſituation even of her "*Pupil*." The Biſhop had joined the Whiſt-players; the Captain had diſappeared the whole evening; and Oceana poſitively perſiſting that her friends and young Meriton ſhould dance, retired alone to one of the ſofas ranged behind the ſilver columns.

She

She had ſcarcely ſeated herſelf, when a "Pilgrim," who, unobſerved by Oceana, had, during the former part of the evening, cloſely followed her footſteps, with an air of concern approached her.

Bowing reſpectfully, he addreſſed her; obſerving, "that however much *etiquette* ought to reſtrain him from addreſſing her by any other name, or as any other character, than a Virgin of the Sun, yet, perceiving her indiſpoſed, he truſted Miſs Melville would pardon the liberty, which he felt it his duty to take, in offering his ſervices, if in any way he could have the honour of being ſerviceable," at the ſame time removing his maſk, he diſcovered himſelf to be Mr. Elmer, the Earl of Latimore's Secretary, with whoſe converſation Oceana had been more than once highly intereſted.

"I am

"I am greatly obliged, ſir, by your polite attention," ſaid Oceana. "I am much better than I was. I believe the heat was too powerful. The croud here is much too great to be pleaſant to me, though I underſtand it is the very eſſence of exhiliration to the true diſciples of faſhion."

"Rather ſay, madam, the true diſciples of folly, who prefer the gratification of vanity to the comforts of health, or the pleaſures of reaſon."

"The votaries of rationality certainly cannot very frequently worſhip in ſuch temples as theſe; yet, I preſume, cuſtom impels many to ſuch reſorts, whom want of courage, rather than want of inclination, deters from more rational purſuits."

"I am perſuaded of the truth of your obſervation by experience. We frequently

frequently meet with a deſcription of people, one may call "ſenſible faſhionables," who lament every day the ſlaughter of their time, and yet every day continue their *time-killing* ſyſtem. Aſk, for inſtance, that young lady in the dreſs of an Indian; and who is really an amiable and ſenſible girl, aſk her when ſhe ſpent an evening at home. She will tell you, that it was on ſome *gala* occaſion, ſome route or other ſpecies of amuſement, which we may with propriety term public. *Evenings at Home*, in the ſenſe that our anceſtors uſed thoſe words, were among the moſt heartfelt pleaſures of ſocial life.—They ſignified converſations by which the mind was improved or amuſed, or domeſtic recreations, into which the heart entered with unmixed ſatisfaction. How changed is the ſcene! The ſocial fire-ſide is vaniſhed completely out of ſight of the faſhionable world, and the

ſelect,

ſelect, cheerful, or intelligent circle of friends, is voted a *bore*. To *ſee company*, according to the faſhion of our times, is, in other words, to open a theatre, or to keep a gaming houſe, and to ſacrifice the delightful intercourſes of friendſhip, to the cold ſplendour of a numerous acquaintance."

Their converſation was now interrupted by the voluble "Flower Girl," Lady Luſtre, who ſeated herſelf near Oceana, and with the moſt abrupt familiarity addreſſed her with—"My dear Miſs Melville, I am quite glad I have found you; you don't know, my dear creature, how I have been tormented by that inſufferable wretch!"

Oceana, with an unaffected dignity of manner, replied—

"My name is Melville, but I am to learn, who it is, that I have the honour of

of addreſſing; as well the nature of her ſufferings, and the author of her torments!"

"Oh fie, fie—don't be ſo ſpiteful as to make me name the creature—you know I mean Charles Scavenge. You muſt know all about it I am ſure. The Ducheſs has told me ſhe loves you, and of courſe ſhe has acquainted you with all the world, and with every body's ſtory."

"Is ſuch univerſal knowledge at the diſpoſal of her Grace?"

"Now don't be ſo ſhockingly provoking! You know it is. Isn't every body at this moment here, and isn't every body dying to ſpeak to her—and wouldn't any one of us tell her the greateſt ſecret in the world, for the honour of being ſeen familiarly chatting with the Ducheſs of Derrington."

"Her

"Her Grace's memory ought to be as capacious as her manſion then, to contain—"

"Capacious—aye, my dear creature, there it is. Why you know the Ducheſs of Swanſhire, in Pall-Mall, can ſqueeze in, within about an hundred, as many as our hoſteſs; but then ſhe's obliged to turn the nurſery into card rooms, and build temporary ſupper rooms over the ſtables."

"That leſſens her Grace of Swanſhire by ſo many feet ſquare in the public opinion, I preſume," ſaid Mr. Elmer.

"To be ſure it does, Mr. Pilgrim, for I don't know your voice," ſaid Lady Luſtre. "What do you ſuppoſe ſuſtains the Ducheſs of Derrington's *eclat* among us all?"

"Oh, no doubt, the width and breadth

breadth of Derrington Houſe!" ſaid Elmer, ſarcaſtically; "but what if Mr. Galaxy ſhould ſucceed in obtaining the two largeſt houſes in Cavendiſh-ſquare, and by throwing them into one, be enabled to receive a hundred or two more than her Grace!"

"Lord bleſs you, how ignorant," replied her Ladyſhip. "Why, my dear Miſs Melville, I'll tell you all about it. It ſeems this Mr. Galaxy is a ſort of a kind of an emigrant, from ſome place or other, enormouſly rich, they ſay, but by no means at all a perſon of high conſideration in any other reſpect.—Well, my dear, it ſeems the man has a ſort of appetite for galas, routes, concerts, and that ſort of thing, and wiſhed to be popular among us; but, my dear, he's as ignorant as a Hottentot how to accompliſh it. He ſpent a prodigious ſum laſt winter in *getting up a night*, but, lord, it did not draw at all."

"And,

"And, pray Madam, what may have occaſioned the failure," ſaid Mr. Elmer.

"The ſilleſt neglect in the world, ſir; he never engaged a "Trumpeter."

"A Trumpeter!" exclaimed Oceana and Mr. Elmer together—"A Trumpeter!"

"Certainly!" ſaid her Ladyſhip.—"Lord, don't you know that every body that wiſhes to be a public character, muſt hire, what we call, a Trumpeter—or Puffer. That is, a perſon who has the talent of ſcribbling, whom you pay ſo much a year, and expences. Then he puts you every day into the Papers; acquaints the public when you come to town, and when you go in the country; where *you* dine to-day, and who dined with *you* yeſterday.—

And

Suppoſe you have a quarrel with any one, he pops in, what we call, a paragraph *piquant;* he kills your enemies at a ſtroke, and marries any couple you pleaſe, though they may have never ſeen each other in their lives."

"Your Trumpeter muſt, at leaſt, be induſtrious in his calling," ſaid Oceana.

"Oh, you've no notion how they toil. I have not mentioned half their ſervices. They muſt worm themſelves into connections with the bookſellers and the engravers; and then you get your life inſerted in magazines, and your portrait exhibited in every window. I have lately had a downright quarrel with my Trumpeter. How d'ye think he ſerved me. You muſt know I wanted to be publiſhed, that is, to be engraved. Well, my dear, every body had

had told me that my whole length, which hung next Admiral Nelſon's half, at the Royal Academy laſt year, was a divine likeneſs. So I fixed upon that, and confided the buſineſs to my Trumpeter, as one don't like to appear in theſe affairs. The engraving was beautifully finiſhed, and coſt me an immenſe ſum, I aſſure you. I would not let it come out, till the town filled, and what do you think was the conſequence? I actually ſaw myſelf exhibited in all the print ſhops, with an inſcription underneath, ſignifying that poor I, as I ſtood with my favourite dog, Trim, in my beautiful fancy dreſs, was—*Madame Buonaparte*, engraved from an original in the poſſeſſion of the Firſt Conſul! Did you ever hear any thing ſo impudent or ſo provoking?"

Ere this rattling Lady of Quality could receive any anſwer to her queſtion,

tion, ſhe had relapſed into a new ſtrain of volubility, which, happily, for the expiring patience of her hearers, was, at length, checked by her Charles, who had diſcovered her, and inſiſted on her dancing.

"Can there be a ſyllable of truth among all we have been liſtening to," ſaid Oceana.

"The colouring may be too high; perhaps, too coarſe," ſaid Mr. Elmer, "but I apprehend there is too much of truth in the outline. The character which has been deſcribed has always exiſted, but it has of late multiplied in proportion with our luxuries and follies. Formerly, the employment of a venal ſcribler was almoſt excluſively confined to politics and political characters; but in theſe times, when oſtentation and frivolity ſeem to have baniſhed

niſhed domeſtic enjoyment, and ſolid happineſs, from the higher ranks of ſociety, the ſpirit of party rages as violently among our ladies of rank and faſhion as among our ſtateſmen, and is propagated and ſupported by as corrupt and as contemptible agents."

The firſt dance was by this time finiſhed, and Julia and Amelia ran with eagerneſs to enquire after the health of their friend. Her ſpirits were recruited by the change of thought, occaſioned by the converſation of Mr. Elmer and Lady Luſtre; and ſhe declared herſelf ſufficiently collected to dance. The ſignal for ſtanding up being given, and the partners of ladies Julia and Amelia, preſenting themſelves, ſhe aroſe at the ſame time, without recollecting that ſhe had no partner. Mr. Elmer, with quickneſs, ſtarted up, and requeſted the honour of dancing with her.

" Sir!" ſaid Oceana, with an emotion, which it is impoſſible to deſcribe. She was ſurpriſed, yet ſhe was not diſpleaſed. She did not unheſitatingly accept his offer, nor did ſhe decline it. Scarcely a moment had elapſed—yet Elmer felt that moment's pauſe with the keeneſt anguiſh. " I am too preſumptuous," ſaid he—then bowed reſpectfully, and retired.

" Who is it?" ſaid Amelia. " I recollect the voice." " And I too,"—ſaid Julia. " It is Mr. Elmer," ſaid Oceana. " Elmer!!" exclaimed Amelia. " What can have brought him here—and in a character too! Poor Pilgrim—Alas, I pity thee. It muſt be ſo—yes, my dear Oceana, you have ſlain him, depend upon it; Secretary and Lord are both at your feet!"

This little dilemma fruſtrated the intentions

tentions of Oceana for the ſecond dance, and her friends determined to ſit with her till its concluſion; after which the doors of the ſupper room were thrown open, and a ſcene of jocund confuſion enſued.

At three a ſignal ſummoned the dancers to reſume their pleaſurable toil. The company now maſked once more, and the exhilirating draughts quaffed at the ſideboards and ſupper tables, began to produce their effects. Characters, that hitherto had been merely dumb reſemblancies, now felt the inſpiration of the grape, and added ſpeech to action. The order which had prevailed before ſupper, was now ſacrificed to hilarity. Dancing became romping, and a latitude of freedom enſued, nearly approaching the chriſtmas gambols of the kitchen or the cottage. From this confuſion many retired to promenade in

the temple, and many wholly quitted the houſe.

Among the former was the Latimore party. During the whole evening they had not ſeen the Earl, and they were now debating whether or not they ſhould return, when they obſerved him, by his domino, in cloſe converſation with the Pilgrim, whom Oceana had deſcribed to be Mr. Elmer.

He now perceived them, and quitting his Secretary, joined them, with apologies for his late attendance.

After a turn or two in the temple, they ſauntered into the ſupper rooms. The Earl appeared thoughtful and dejected, and his gloomy ſilence communicated itſelf to the whole party. At length, "I have been liſtening," ſaid the Earl, "to the deſcription of a ſingular

gular character, an Aſtrologer, that, it ſeems, addreſſed himſelf to you in the beginning of the evening. That gentleman, in the character of the Pilgrim, with whom you ſaw me converſing, informed me,—"

"Did Mr. Elmer, then, hear the old Aſtrologer?" interrupted Amelia.

"Who told you, pray, that Elmer was the Pilgrim?" ſaid the Earl, ſternly.

"Miſs Melville found that out, my Lord," replied ſhe, archly.

"Miſs Melville," exclaimed he—"Indeed!—truly, Miſs Melville's diſcoveries are not a little wonderful," continued he, with a meaning which Oceana well underſtood.

"It was mere accident, my Lord, that cauſed Mr. Elmer to unmaſk," ſaid ſhe, ſcarcely knowing whether ſhe

did right or wrong to notice his obſervation.

" Why, ſtrange accidents do happen, certainly, *we all know that,*" ſaid he.

Oceana now determined to remain ſilent. His lordſhip continued—" Well then, Mr. Elmer has informed me of this Aſtrologer, and, I think, I have myſelf ſeen the ſame figure he deſcribes, at more than one place. Pray, wore he a maſk?"

" I rather think," ſaid Lady Julia, " his face was painted to imitate extreme old age."

" Extreme old age, ſay you!" cried the Earl. " Was his robe of a light grey colour?"

" The ſame, my Lord," ſaid Julia.

" And round his waiſt was there a girdle?" No

No one immediately anſwered.

" I aſk, did no one obſerve a belt, or girdle round his waiſt ?"

" I did, my Lord," ſaid Oceana.

" Well, madam, and—"

" It was of black velvet," ſaid Oceana, " and on it were worked, in gold, the twelve ſigns of the zodiac."

" Enough, enough, madam," cried the Earl, wildly—" Conviction of my doubts on this point too, it ſeems I owe to you." Then in a ſmothered tone, yet ſtill audible, " Still will it follow me ! In every public place I meet it. I ſaw the ſame thing at Vienna—Florence—Naples—Paris—"

" And may at London," exclaimed

a voice, which made the Earl tremble. After a moment's pauſe—"Is he not behind us?" aſked he, in a tremulous voice.

Not a ſingle character was walking near them, but a black domino was cloſe at the elbow of Lord Latimore. Juſt as they reached the door this domino tapped the Earl on the ſhoulder; he turned round, and at that inſtant the black domino was thrown open, and diſcovered the "Aſtrologer" it had concealed.

As he diſappeared at the door, he pointed to the Earl, and exclaimed—"*Living Monument of Splendid Miſery.*"

The object of his addreſs ſunk back, almoſt fainting, into the arms of the Biſhop. He had juſt ſufficient ſtrength to ſay "Home, home, home," and leaning

leaning on the arm of his brother, reached his chariot, where Elmer was waiting for him.

The whole party inſtantly retired, and, under conſiderable alarm for the Earl, reached Latimore Houſe.

CHAP. VIII.

Aſtrology.

BY the time that the carriages ſtopped in Berkley-ſquare, the Earl had reſumed his wonted appearance of tranquillity, and was enabled to encounter the affectionate ſolicitudes of the family with perfect compoſure. He perceived, however, from their enquiring countenances, that they expected ſome explanation of the ſtrange effects, which the appearance of the Aſtrologer had produced; and he felt, that to deny it, would increaſe that curioſity, which partial gratification might, in this early ſtage of it, perhaps, lull to ſleep.—With this intention he took the hand of

of the Biſhop, and preſſing it with great earneſtneſs—"Brother," ſaid he, "a word with you." He then drew him aſide, and obſerved to him, that he was ſenſible how much he and his ſiſters muſt have been affected and ſurpriſed by his behaviour, and the conduct of the maſk, whoſe appearance had created ſuch emotions in him; but continued he, "let me entreat you to diſmiſs for ever any apprehenſions for me, which ſo ſtrange an incident may have created in your kind hearts; for, I aſſure you, it was merely the ſurpriſe I felt at ſeeing a man, who, I had every reaſon to believe, was, at that moment, confined, as a lunatic, at Paris. Many years ago, I was engaged, officially, in ſome buſineſs relating to a family, at Vienna, in which this perſon took a warm intereſt. It is not now a ſuitable time to enter into the particulars, nor, indeed are they at all worth the relating.

The concluſion, however, of the buſineſs to which I allude, occaſioned the death of a perſon, ſo much beloved by this man, that the loſs of her abſolutely turned the poor creature's brain. He has taken it into his head, that I was the cauſe of her death, and actually occaſioned me ſome inconvenience at Vienna, at Naples, and at Paris. So much ſo at the latter place, that I was under the neceſſity of applying to the police, and he was confined there as a madman. That event happened ſeveral years ago, and hearing nothing of the poor creature ſince, I imagined that he was dead. When to-night I heard his dreſs deſcribed, the ſame he wore many years ago, I could ſcarcely credit what I heard; nor till the ſight of the poor wretch himſelf at once convinced and overpowered me, did I believe it poſſible that he could be in England. I truſt I ſhall neither hear nor ſee any more

more of him. If I do, means muſt be taken to place the lunatic under a due reſtraint. Let me requeſt you to make this explanation, for me, to my ſiſters and Miſs Melville, in what way you think proper, and conſider the affair as worth no further thought." He then took his leave and retired.

This varniſh of indifference ſerved his temporary purpoſe. It lulled the apprehenſions, though it did not entirely ſtifle the curioſity of the family.

No ſooner, however, had he left the room, than he let drop the vizor, and all the goading and acute ſenſations of his mind ſpoke loudly in his countenance.

Durand, accuſtomed as he was to contemplate in his maſter's perſon the image of diſquietude, obſerved an increaſed

creaſed degree of agitation in his face as he entered the chamber.

The ſervant, who had lighted him up ſtairs, had placed the candles upon the table, and was retiring.—"Stay," cried the Earl, and then relapſed into profound and ſilent thought.

After a conſiderable pauſe—"There is no other way," ſaid he to himſelf.—"No choice is left me now." Then turning to the ſervant—"Tell Mr. Elmer, that I deſire to ſee him here."—Durand, in obedience to a ſignal, retired to the anti-room, and the Earl was alone.

"Caution may ſeal the lips too long," ſaid he, in ſoliloquy, as with agitated ſteps he paced the chamber. "I have not been precipitate—I am not precipitate. Five years I have ſtudied his character,

character, and tried his attachment.—'Tis plain he loves me warmly; that he would risk his life for me, I doubt not; I see—I see it in his eyes. But his principles, his theories of virtue seem so fixed, so rooted, that were he to know the whole, all that I have done, and all that I aspire to do—*I am not sure*—no, no—indeed I am not *sure* of him. And if not of *him*—of whom, in the whole world then, can I make choice, as the confidant of my hopes and fears, the repository of my past errors, and my future enterprises. The mighty purpose of my soul, in embryo, has long laboured *here*," (striking his breast) "Now is the hour of its birth at hand. Appointed hour in the Will of Fate, led on by circumstances and coincidencies, that come like couriers of preparation before a solemn crisis. The dream of Mortimer, his ghost at the levee, his skeleton at the council!—

And

And then, that ſuch a dream, creating ſuch emotions and ejaculations, ſhould be expoſed to a girl, unknown—a ſtranger—an interloper, is a moſt legible ordinance of fate. Again, that ſhe ſhould be the moſt obſervant witneſs of that myſterious tormenter, whoſe viſage blaſts me; nay, that at the firſt time of his appearing to me in my native country, ſhe ſhould be preſent! This girl is, in ſome way or other, a link in the chain of deſtiny that encircles Latimore! Myſterious chain! How ſhall I ſtudy it? Its extent is hidden from me. To what bourne it draws my ſteps, I tremble, and yet I glory to anticipate!"

As he uttered the laſt words, his mind, ſuddenly riſing as by ſome myſterious impulſe, ſeemed to have overcome at once the temporary gloom which the adventures of the evening had occaſioned. Swiftly approaching the window

window, he drew up the curtains, unbarred the ſhutter, and admitted the moon's rays full into the chamber. It was a clear froſty morning, and the Heavens preſented a moſt intereſting picture. On the right of the Moon, ſhone with its fulleſt luſtre, the ſuperb planet, Jupiter; Saturn was to the left, and conſiderably below the Moon. Others of the planets were viſible, and the countleſs ſpots of glowing light, which conſtitute the fixed ſtars, filled the whole atmoſpheric arch with glory.

A clown, on whoſe mind no ray of education had ever fallen, could not have gazed with indifference at the ſcene. Simple nature would inſtinctively have yielded to emotions of delight and of pleaſure, for the ſcene was beautiful. Intelligent minds would have contemplated, with ſentiments of reverent aſtoniſhment and rapture, the air-balanced

air-balanced worlds, that moved viſible and perceptible to their ſenſes, however incomprehenſible to their underſtandings. But there is a claſs of men, on whoſe minds the aſpect of the Heavens creates emotions peculiar to themſelves, and whoſe hearts ſink or aſpire with the poſition of the planets.

Few men of ſtrong underſtandings, eſpecially in recent times, have ever yielded up their ſouls ſo fully to this enthuſiaſm, as did the Earl of Latimore. Jupiter was the ſtar of his nativity. As that brilliant orb now ſtruck his ſight, his heart beat with an inſtant increaſe of ſtrength; a glow of joy invigorated his whole ſyſtem: he fixed his delighted eye on the planet; he folded his arms acroſs his breaſt, with an air of triumph, and ſeemed to ſtand more firmly.

Such was his attitude, when Elmer entered.

entered. "Elmer, is it you?" ſaid he, turning round to him.—"Come hither, man. Did you ever view a more delightful ſcene. See with what ſuperior luſtre ſhines yon planet, Jupiter. Does it not infuſe into your breaſt the glow of animation? Elmer, 'tis the ſtar that ruled the moment of my birth. I cannot gaze on it, and ſuppreſs emotions that ſwell this heart almoſt to burſting. Oh, lingering hours, ſpeed on, ſpeed on, leſt my aſpiring ſpirit, too eager for the glory in its view, o'erſhoot its aim and object!"

After a ſilence of ſome minutes, during which his eyes were rivetted on the ſtar, he turned to Elmer, and with an indeſcribable air of aſſured and ſatisfied complacency, he ſeized his hand between both his own, exclaiming—"Yes, Elmer, yes—the hour—the moment is arrived. No longer ſtand you and I in the

the ſame relationſhip towards each other that we have ſtood. No more of ſervant —no more of maſter. I have choſen with caution, and my high fate, I feel, prompted the deciſion. You, Elmer, of all the beings that ſurround me, you, have I choſen, for my friend. Come then to my arms, and let my heart, at this auſpicious moment, melt from its icy ſtate for ever, and, joined to yours, become a ſpring of friendſhip, ſpontaneouſly pouring out its eſſence in unreſerved communications, of every thought, there foſtered."

Elmer, aſtoniſhed, ſhrunk back, involuntary, from the Earl's embrace. He almoſt doubted the evidence of his ſenſes; he could with difficulty convince himſelf that there was reality in what he heard and ſaw. He ſtammered out a few unconnected words, in which he attempted to expreſs his great ſurpriſe.

priſe. "Nay, Elmer, ſhrink not from my honeſt graſp," replied the Earl.—"You have known me long enough to learn my character. I am no hypocrite to you. I tell you plainly, I want a friend; I want a human heart to ſhare my feelings; a human mind to help my counſels, and to aid my enterpriſes. You have I choſen; if you reject my friendſhip—"

"Pardon me, my Lord;—Reject your friendſhip. Heaven knows with what anxiety I have ſtudied to deſerve your patronage. Your great mind, your ſuperior talents and experience, my Lord, rendered your approbation a reward for every ſervice; but to that you have added ſuch valuable favours, that gratitude, I hope, as much, at leaſt, as pride and admiration, has bound

bound me to your lordſhip, by ties, indiſſoluble. Pardon me, then, if my ſurpriſe at—"

"Come, come Elmer—no more of this ſtrain, if you pleaſe. I have taken my reſolution, and my heart feels lighter already. Cloſe thoſe ſhutters, and let down the curtain. There—bring yourſelf a chair to the fireſide; 'tis a cold night. Come, ſit you down—draw nearer. You paſſed Durand in the anti-room?"

"I did, my Lord."

"It were as well, I think, to bolt that door." Elmer bolted the door, and took his ſeat again. A ſhort ſilence enſued. The Earl meditated in what manner to open the communication he had reſolved upon. At length, he obſerved—"How various, how oppo-

ſite

ſite are the diſpoſitions, the purſuits and allotments, of that one ſpecies of animals—Man. Reflect, Elmer, for one moment, and bring to your imagination, the *gew-gaw ſhow*, the puppets, the dolls, we have ſeen to-night, at the Ducheſs's maſk. What a profuſion of luxuries and dainties to ſtimulate the ſpirits and the appetite. Liſten to the gibes and merriment of the various groupes; hear the briſk notes of muſic; ſee the light-hearted dancers moving in fantaſtic forms. Why, what a happy, joyful race of beings ſee we here!

" Now take another ſcene, which, beyond a doubt, was at that ſame moment exhibiting the ſame creature, Man, in another point of view. How many pallid victims of diſeaſe are, every moment, languiſhing on beds of ſtraw, in roofleſs hovels, expoſed to the dread horrors of poverty and pain combined,

combined; without one ray of comfort to illume their future proſpect, or one whiſper of ſweet ſympathy to beguile the torturing hour! Suffering all the ill that nature can inflict upon humanity, and wanting every artificial aid, which man may yield to man. Elmer, ſuch ſcenes are ever paſſing on the ſame great theatre in which we play our parts! Contraſt but theſe extremes in the allotments of Beings, ſprung from one common origin, formed in one common mould, poſſeſſing in common the ſame paſſions, faculties and feelings, and inevitably doomed to one common end; then tell me, whether I am to deem the cauſe of this diſtinction a bleſſing or a curſe upon mankind.—Ought I to hail civilization as an angel's ſcheme, or as a dæmon's plot. The good that art produces is ſimply juſt ſuch phantoms of felicity as theſe we have been gazing at to-night, while the evil,

evil, of which ſhe is the parent, is nothing ſhort of all the numerous pains and wants which mar the face of God's creation, and torment his creatures."

The zeal with which the Earl uttered the latter part of his obſervations was conſpicuous in the glow which coloured his cheeks, and ſparkled in his expreſſive eyes. He fixed thoſe eyes firmly on Elmer, ſcrutinizing, as it were, the impreſſion of the opinions which he had ſo ſtrongly expreſſed.

Elmer remained ſilent.

"Perhaps," reſumed Lord Latimore, "you, Elmer, are not prepared to aſſent to my concluſion."

"In truth, my Lord, I am not. I own, myſelf the diſciple of a different hypotheſis; and am a zealous advocate for the progreſs of civilization, and the ſpread of knowledge."

"I ſhould marvel if you were not ſo,

Elmer; and, believe me, I have no intention to attempt your converſion to my doctrine, which, however, I ſtill adhere to. I have lived too long—have ſeen and thought, and felt too much, to waver in my principles at this hour.

"But you are young, and happy," continued he, with a ſigh. "Your heart ſtill foſters dreams of virtuous joy, and moral pleaſures. Phantoms of happineſs play before your imagination; and you revel in intellectual delights. I know perfectly the ſtate of your mind. It was once, perhaps, my own, and though I have been led to ſmile at the fancies I cheriſhed; though I am induced to relinquiſh, as impracticable, the ſchemes of my youth; yet, Elmer, my heart, is not without its object, nor does my reaſon ſleep inactive. I ſink not from diſappointment to apathy. Oh, no; at this moment my pulſe

pulſe quickens, my head whirls round at the thought of that object. It produces an ardour of ſoul inexplicable by words; an ardour that invigorates inſtead of conſuming by its glow. Why do I longer delay to impart that object to my friend? Liſten, then, Elmer, for the moment is come, when I am compelled to truſt you with my ſoul!"

"My Lord!" exclaimed Elmer, with amazement.

"Yes, with my ſoul!" repeated the Earl. "The ſoul which animates this trunk—the eſſence of the thing you call Lord Latimore, is a ſpirit; the offſpring of an union you may deem terrible—of ambition and revenge. The ſtimulating principle within me, call it by what name you will, was generated by ambition, as boundleſs as ever ſwelled the human breaſt; and by revenge, as

keen and ruthleſs as ever gnawed the human heart. This ſpirit is my animation: if it ſhall obtain the object which it is inceſſantly purſuing, it will expire delighted in poſſeſſion of its prey, and ever-blazing glory ſhall illume my honoured ſepulchre! But if it reſts ſhort of the victorious graſp, only by the ſpace of a hair's breadth, it will be annihilated by the foe it follows to annihilate; and then, inſufferable torment is in the thought, foul imps of ignominy will ſquat their loathſome forms on my unbruiſed bones, and heap eternal infamy on the remains of Latimore!"

As he ſpoke, the very ſpirit which he had perſonified, was diſcoverable in his countenance. The force of his language was aided by correſponding geſtures and actions, and his whole appearance filled Elmer with a degree of horror which he had never felt before. The

The Earl, ſcarcely remembering that he was preſent, continued pouring forth the effuſions of his ſoul. " But hence ſuch horrors!" exclaimed he. " Is not the glittering wreath of conqueſt almoſt, already here " lifting his hand to his forehead. " Do I not hold this weapon?—This other? Do I not poſſeſs this powerful engine?" Laying his hands on the *port folio*, which contained his ſtate papers. " Have I not all the means, which human powers can graſp?" continued he, then modulating his voice to a ſolemnity of utterance— " And have I not the lofty evidences of the bright Heavens themſelves, that Latimore's is an illuſtrious deſtiny!— Thou, Jupiter, aſcended at my birth, and every other token in the firmament conjoined to promiſe glory! The taliſman of animating hope, the aſſuring voice of deſtiny is this," drawing a paper from his boſom. " Here, in uner-

ring lines, is chronicled the aſpect of the deſtinies which ruled my natal hour; from this I gather food for my ambition, and ſtrength for undertakings of vaſt magnitude. Nor ſhall one little ſpeck of the malignant, in ſuch a bright diſplay of proſperous prophecy, awe me from my purpoſe. Yet is it a dingy ſpot, and much too nigh to Jupiter, the ſtar of my nativity!"

Seating himſelf once more by the fire-ſide, near Elmer, he unfolded the paper which he had taken from his boſom. It was his horoſcope. He explained to him the ſigns, and made him acquainted with the poſition of the planets, and the whole appearance of the Heavens at the hour of his birth. His eyes ſparkled, as he pointed to the aſtrological repreſentation of Jupiter, and he continued thus:—

"On

" On the 13th day of September, in the year 1757, at the moment when this moſt glorious ſtar aſcended, I was born the heir of an illuſtrious name, and of a princely fortune. My birth was hailed with joy, and my years of infancy and childhood were watched with the moſt anxious tenderneſs and care. My brothers and my ſiſters, born at ſubſequent periods, were ſcarcely conſidered as my equals in nature, and were kept at a ridiculous diſtance from their idol brother.

" The earlieſt impreſſion which my mind received, was the ſenſe of my own ſuperiority above all I ſaw around me. Infinite pains were taken to ſtore my youthful imagination with images of greatneſs and ſublimity. The natural bias of my ſoul was in perfect uniſon with this diſcipline; and my father early perceived tokens of the ſucceſs of his endeavours, and the fulfilment of his

ardent wiſhes. Often would he place me on his knee, when I was yet a child, and laying his hand upon my head, exclaim, "My noble ſon, I ſee already in thy face the full accompliſhment of my proud hopes. Thy brothers may be noble men and great men, but thou wilt be the hero. They may be Generals, but thou ſhall find them armies to command, point out the quarter of the globe in which their ſwords ſhall be unſheathed, and dictate when the murderous ſteel ſhall hide its blood-ſtained point within the peaceful ſcabbard.—They may riſe to the higheſt poſts of honour or emolument in the State or Church, but thou ſhalt be the diſpenſer of ſuch gifts, which they and other ſubjects ſhall hold as courteſies of thee, my ſon, whom power ſhall almoſt deify."

With ſome ſuch raphſodies as theſe would

would he inflame my youthful fancy, and heap unneceſſary fuel on a heart, by nature, blazing with ambition.

" As I increaſed in years my ruling paſſion gathered ſtrength: but in the ſame degree with my ambition alſo grew its neceſſary concomitants, reſerve and cunning. Have you not ſeen the puny bubbles which, iſſuing at the ſport of boys, from pieces of tobacco pipes, expand to certain heights, there to expire in vapour. So have I ſeen ſome twenty of my compeers with full enough of the *aſpiring quality* within them to raiſe them over the heads of common men, attaining juſt ſuch and ſuch degrees of greatneſs, and then have ſunk again, through an unfitneſs of their ſpirits to endure the change of region.

" Not ſo was it with me. From my father's precepts, and his experience,

from close and ardent ſtudy, I derived ſuch knowledge of myſelf and of mankind, as tempered without diminiſhing my ambition.

" At nineteen years of age I travelled, and viſited the principal courts of Europe. At twenty-one, I was appointed ſecretary to the old Lord P———, who was then Ambaſſador at Vienna. This ſituation I held as a ſort of initiation into the myſteries of politics, and as a neceſſary introduction to the path which I had reſolved to tread.

" Now liſten, Elmer, to an anecdote, ſingular from its coincidence with that temper of mind which I have been deſcribing to you.

" During our reſidence at Vienna Lord P——— was in habits of intimacy with the family of the venerable Count Roſenbergh,

enbergh, one of the moſt reſpectable Nobles of the German Court. As the friend of the former, I was introduced to this family, and, under that title, I ſoon gained for myſelf ſuch an eſtabliſhment in the affectionate regards of the old Count, his Counteſs, and their lovely daughter, Julia, that I became, as it were, one of themſelves. Whenever relaxation from a ſevere application to my employments permitted, I was at the Count Roſenbergh's manſion. It was the reſort of the firſt people in Germany. Men of letters and ſcience, natives and foreigners, mingled conſtantly at his hoſpitable table, and every evening was devoted either to the moſt intereſting and ſcientific *converſaziones*, or to delightful concerts of vocal and inſtrumental muſic. The Counteſs was an Italian by birth; deſcended by the paternal ſide. from the the illuſtrious houſe of the De Medici, and allied by

the maternal, to the firſt Venetian families. Her ſiſter was married to the Marquis Della Zoretta, a nobleman of Bologna, at whoſe palace the heir of the Roſenbergh family was at this period on a viſit.

" Some weeks had elapſed in an agreeable tranquillity, when, on a ſudden, I obſerved a ſorrowful change in the countenances and in the behaviour of this noble family. The Germans are notoriouſly the reverſe of communicative, and I could only conjecture the cauſe of their melancholy. I remarked that their evident depreſſion of ſpirits happened on the ſame day that letters arrived from Bologna; I, therefore, ſuppoſed that intelligence, of an unexpected and unpleaſant nature, had been received from the Count's ſon. I ſoon learned that my conjecture was well founded. Repairing one afternoon to the

the Count's, I was informed, that the family had that morning left Vienna for their country reſidence, at the diſtance of forty miles, and were not expected to return.

" Ere I had recovered my ſurpriſe at ſo ſudden and early departure from the metropolis, for it was only the month of April, the Porter delivered me a letter from the Count. It expreſſed ſentiments of the moſt flattering deſcription, reſpecting myſelf, and ſtated that a domeſtic diſappointment, ſevere, as unexpected, had ſo much diſordered his mind, that he felt it neceſſary to retire to his caſtle for ſome time. " Yet, Latimore," concluded the good old Count, " Yet, Latimore, though from the gaze of common minds, and from the croud of common beings, I am deſirous of retiring within the circle of my family, I do not exclude you from that circle. If your engagements

engagements permit, and your inclination prompts you to liſten to the diſappointment of my heart's long-cheriſhed hopes (for I can talk on no other ſubject), come to Roſenbergh Caſtle, and be welcome to ſuch entertainment as we may be able to give you. If the proſpect is too melancholy to invite you, I ſhall ſigh at the loſs of your ſociety; but I honour you too much to believe that your friendſhip will diſſolve at the firſt ſhadow of a cloud o'er the hitherto too ſplendid deſtiny of

ROSENBERGH."

"After an arrangement with Lord P—— I repaired immediately to Roſenbergh Caſtle, with the deſign of paſſing a week there; inſtead of which it became my reſidence for ſeveral months. Soon after my arrival there the Count confided to me the cauſe of his melancholy. His ſon, Octavian, had

had long cheriſhed a paſſion for the only child of the Marquis Della Zoretta.—His parents not merely approved, they applauded his choice. It was a union congenial, in all reſpects, to the wiſhes of the Count, and it was ſo far ſanctioned by the parents of Olivia, that they had declared, nothing would afford them ſo high a gratification as to ſee their daughter wedded to the heir of the Count Roſenbergh. All then that appeared wanting to a conſummation, ſo devoutly wiſhed, was the aſſent of the young lady herſelf. She had frequently made long viſits at Vienna, and at Roſenbergh Caſtle. The moſt cordial friendſhip had ſubſiſted between the two couſins from their childhood, and young Octavian had never once permitted himſelf to doubt upon the queſtion of his overtures being readily accepted by Olivia, whenever the proper period arrived that he might make them.

That

That period arrived, and upon that pleaſing embaſſy had Octavian gone to the Zoretta Palace, at Bologna, when I became acquainted with his family. Poor Octavian!—He declared his long-concealed, and hope-fed paſſion, and was rejected. The ingenuous Olivia, abhorring diſſimulation and evaſion, in unequivocal expreſſions had aſſured the youth, ſhe did not feel for him that love, which, ſhe was ſure, was neceſſary to the happineſs of the married ſtate, and without which ſhe was reſolved never to become a wife. The letters from Octavian announcing this event to the Roſenbergh family, were ſo full of grief and diſappointment, ſuch pictures of wounded pride and diſappointed paſſion, that the fond parents almoſt ſunk beneath their apprehenſions for his health and intellects. He had declared to them his intentions of returning, but earneſtly entreated that he might be permitted to meet

meet them at the caſtle, as the "*haunts of ſociety would long be his averſion.*" It was in compliance with this deſire they had removed ſo ſuddenly to the Caſtle, where they daily expected his arrival; accompanied by the Lady Olivia, and her father and mother; the Marquis having inſiſted on the viſit, that his brother-in-law, the Count, might be aſſured of the continued cordiality of the two families, notwithſtanding the diſconcertment of their long-formed project for its cloſer union.

"The evening previous to their arrival was an important one in the hiſtory of my life. Mark, Elmer, in the progreſs of my tale, from what frivolous and inſignificant incidents the moſt important conſequences reſult! I have ſaid it was the month of April. I had taken a ſolitary ride, after an early dinner, through the park, and round the

ſkirts

ſkirts of an adjacent wood, and had juſt ſufficient daylight to find my road home. It grew dark as I approached the caſtle, and my attention was directed, by ſome lights in the windows, to a ſmall tower detached from the principal buildings, which I had not till then obſerved. On entering the caſtle I mentioned my diſcovery to the Count. He ſmiled, and obſerved, that he ſuppoſed old Julian was at his labours. I begged an explanation.—"You are not ignorant," ſaid the Count, "that a century or two back, one of the moſt flouriſhing ſciences, in this part of Europe, was Aſtrology. Every nobleman had his ſoothſayer, and many were themſelves ſtudents, if not maſters, in the myſteries of the planets. You, therefore, can ſcarcely viſit a caſtle of any antiquity among us, that has not its aſtrological tower. The building you mention is of that deſcription. *Our* caſtle,"

caſtle," continued he, with an emphaſis, " *Our* caſtle is more than two hundred years old, it has of courſe undergone many alterations, but that tower remains, I believe, in it's original ſtate at this hour.

" My father was but a lukewarm diſciple of the Divining School, but his father, one of the moſt celebrated of our anceſtors, and as renowned a warrior as ere blazoned the annals of hiſtory, was an enthuſiaſt in his devotions to the ſtars. He never commenced an operation in the field, nor gave an opinion in the council, till he and his High Prieſt, Julian, had conſulted the poſition of the planets."

" Was Julian living then, my Lord, in the days of your grandfather ?" ſaid I.

" If he had he would be now above an

an hundred years old," replied he with a ſmile. " No, the preſent Julian is the ſon of him I have named, and he is nearly ſeventy years old! My father, who was not entirely free from the old ſuperſtition, ſettled an annuity upon him, and I ſuffer him to remain in the undiſturbed enjoyment of his ancient privileges, though he deems me a heretic. Poor old Julian!—He told me but this morning, with a moſt ſolemn ſhaking of the head, that I never condeſcended to viſit the tower; " And yet," ſaid he, " Strange and awful conjunctions, at this moment, are about to take place. Some cloud lowers over this honoured manſion. Ah, my young Lord Octavian, had you but been born one hour later"—and then again the old man ſhook his head.

You excite my curioſity, ſaid I to the Count. Would it be profane to viſit old Julian and his tower?

"Oh no, you would delight him:—but remember his age, my friend, and pray don't laugh at him."

We repaired to the Aſtrological Tower. It was ſituated moſt conveniently for the purpoſe of aſtronomical obſervations, on an eminence, and commanded a complete and uninterrupted view of the horizon. The lower part was ſimply a dwelling, but the upper ſtories conſiſted of rooms, moſt curiouſly fitted up for the labours of Aſtrologers. Teleſcopes, globes, compaſſes and quadrants, of all ſizes, were ſcattered in various places; huge folios were ranged around, and various ſcrolls of parchment were carefully piled up and labelled. Old Julian, delighted with the viſit, bowed his grey head, moſt reverently, to the earth, and with much ſolemnity, conducted us through the rooms. At laſt we gained the thrice hallowed

hallowed ſpot, where the old man purſued his ſtudies. I cannot well deſcribe my feelings at the ſcene. Nothing like the ridicule which the Count had deprecated did I feel, neither was it reverence, but ſomething more allied to cowardice or fear. In a half circle ſtood ſeven coloſſal figures, formed of ſhining braſs, with crowns on their heads, and ſceptres in their hands. On the head of each ſhone illuminated ſtars, of different degrees of luſtre. The room received no other light than what iſſued from theſe ſtars."

"Theſe images," ſaid old Julian, "repreſent the heavenly planets that rule our earth, and us. He, fartheſt from you, with cold and melancholy aſpect, and wrinkled front, is SATURN. He, oppoſite, in armour, whoſe ſtar emits red-coloured light, is MARS.—Neither of theſe bring good to us inhabitants of earth."

Next

Next ſtood VENUS, repreſented by a lovely woman's form, and on her head a ſtar ſhone with a bright ſoft luſtre. MERCURY, with wings, ſtood on the left, and oppoſite were placed the SUN and MOON. But Elmer, in the center ſtood illuſtrious JUPITER. The bright effulgence of his ſtar I think I ſtill behold; it ſhot quite through my heart, and I ſtarted as the old man pointed my obſervation towards it. "Ah, that would have been his," ſaid he, had our Octavian been born one hour later; that joyous ſtar would have been his. Oh, my gracious Lord," continued the old man, "had Jupiter been his; ſee here—now near at hand, a wonderful conjunction of that glorious ſtar. Look, look, my Lord, how near—how near he was of falling into a deſtiny more glorious than his great anceſtor, your honoured grandfather." As he ſpoke he drew the Count towards a black table,

on

on which was deſcribed in chalk, the horoſcope of young Octavian. I caſt my eye on it, and ſtarted with ſurpriſe. "I did not know till now," exclaimed I, "that Octavian, of Roſenbergh, and I, were born on the ſame day." Old Julian ſtarted in his turn, and ſtood with open mouth, fixed eyes, and clenched hands, trembling before me. "You—you—you"— ſtammered out the old man, "and were you born on the 13th of September, 1757; at what hour—ſay at what hour? I pray you, forgive my rudeneſs, but, I beſeech you, ſay what hour."

"In my watch-caſe I wore a piece of ſatin, on which my mother had cut, with her ſciſſars, the day and hour of my birth. I valued it, and wore it for her ſake. I drew my watch, and ſhewed the caſe to the old man. He gazed at it a moment, and then letting it

it fall from his hands, exclaimed—"The very hour—the very hour!" and ſunk on his knees at my feet. "Noble, high-born youth," continued he, "for ſuch I am ſure thou art; favoured of fate; a ſplendid, ſplendid deſtiny, indeed, is thine, if thou can'ſt overcome one ſmall malignant ſpeck, diminutive almoſt as nothing. Oh try; be patient as thou art magnanimous, and ſhine illuſtrious among mankind. Reverſe that conduct, and become a *Living Monument of Splendid Miſery.*"

At the repetition of theſe words, Lord Latimore's courage for a moment failed him. He caught hold of Elmer's arm, and a chill dew came o'er his frame.

"You are ill, my Lord," cried Elmer.

"No—no—Elmer; no, my friend,

no, but I muſt confeſs to you, that the ſound of that ſentence, even from my own lips, almoſt palſies my ſoul.—What then muſt I have felt to-night, when I heard them from the mouth of that tormentor, the *Aſtrologer*, who is the exact reſemblance, and wears the very garb of old Julian, who has been dead theſe many years? Elmer, is'n't it enough to make a *man* tremble? It *does* alarm me—I own it. It haunted me at Paris, Naples, Florence, and it has purſued me here. I have ſhunned it like a coward, but the moment is arrived when I muſt encounter it. Help me, then, Elmer, in this emergency, and be my friend for ever. To-morrow, as early as you will, come to me, and I will reſume my ſtory. Leave me now, for I find myſelf too agitated to proceed. I do not even *ſay be ſilent*,—to you it is unneceſſary. To your reſt, my friend, for you can ſleep. Go, go to reſt.

CHAP. IX.

CHAP. IX.

A Rival.

AT the next interview with his ſecretary, the Earl thus reſumed his ſtory:—

"To a mind naturally ambitious, Elmer, ſuch an adventure as that which I related to you laſt night, could not be indifferent. The old Aſtrologer continued a long harangue, to which I was unable to attend. My ſoul was ſo totally abſorbed by the contemplation of the glorious deſtiny thus confidently promiſed me, that I felt as it were the victim of ſome magic ſpell, whoſe potent influence had benumbed my faculties, rendering me inſenſate to

every other impreſſion, and blind to every other object.

" At length the Count and I took our leave of old Julian, and returned to the caſtle. My thoughts, however, ſtill lingered with my heart in the aſtrological tower.

" I retired early to my chamber. Memory awakened by the ſingular accident of the evening, there exhibited in freſh and glowing colours, the dazzling heights of power and of ſplendour, which in my boyiſh days my father had indelibly engraven on my mind;—and to the ſublime aſcent of which my ſpirit unceaſingly and unweariedly aſpired.

" I had long felt conſcious of ſuperior powers; and that conviction alone had hitherto given wings to my ambition.

tion. But now, a new, a ſtronger inſpiration aided me in my daring flight, with full aſſurance of ſucceſs, enduing me with energies of mind, that ſeemed to ſoar beyond the limited expanſion of mere mortal powers.

" At times, indeed, a momentary doubt obtruded. What folly exclaimed I, to permit a dotard ſtar-gazer thus to play upon me? Fool that I am to be cheated with the coinages of an old man's fancy, and ſink myſelf to a level with credulous village girls, who run to gipſy oracles and pay their pence to have their fortunes told?

" Again theſe thoughts receded, like jaundiced prejudice before the healthful beams of truth, when I conſidered that the old man had drawn my horoſcope within an hour of my birth, when between him and me the billows of a

vaſt ocean rolled; and when he could not poſſibly have conjectured that any one among the millions of beings, to whom that moment's deſtiny belonged, would ever ſtand before him to claim the copy, which he drew as theirs.

"Still leſs could he have anticipated, that there ſhould come one whoſe genius would be in uniſon with ſuch a deſtiny, and whoſe wealth would enable him to reward the oracle who revealed it.

"Theſe reflections diſpelled all doubts relative to the *genuineneſs* of this title-deed to Splendid Fortune. Julian could have had no purpoſe whatever to ſerve by an impoſture; nay the very train of accidents and events that had brought us to a knowledge of each other, and after that had led to the particular diſcloſure of my natal hour

hour, were confirmations of as ſtrong a nature as mortal ſenſes were capable of receiving.

" And after all, ſaid I to myſelf,—What am I called upon to believe? That Deſtiny will crown my purſuit of glory with ſucceſs! Even admit then, that this aſſurance is mere fancy—grant that the evidence of the ſtars means nothing; ſtill Latimore is not deluded, is not led aſtray. I am not beckoned from the path I travel. The voice to which I liſten creates no new expectancy. The influence of the faith that I embrace, is but the confirmation of the hopes which I already follow.

" Such was the reaſoning that converted me to the faith to which I have ever ſince adhered. Yes—ſtart not, Elmer, you view before you a confirmed diſciple of the Doctrine of the Fates.

From that night to the exiſting moment I have never wavered from that perſuaſion. It is the nurſe of every plan I form in thought, and the ſource of all the warm and potent energies with which I act.

" Thus much of what has paſſed, even in my mind, was neceſſary to be diſcloſed—further I ſhall not take up your attention. I, therefore, omit the frequent interviews and long controverſies which I had with Julian, and paſs on to a ſeries of ſingular and important events, which beginning at this period at the Caſtle of Roſenbergh, has continued to the very date of yeſternight, when that abhorred phantom, or ghoſt, or devil, for human being I think it cannot be, aſſuming the reſemblance of old Julian, ſounded thoſe words of horror in my ears, which but to recollect petrifies my blood, and freezes almoſt the very ſource of life itſelf." A

A death-like paleneſs ſpread o'er his countenance as he ſpoke, and he trembled. After a few moments' pauſe, with an effort that once more brought the colour of life to his cheek, he appeared to have ſubdued an internal enemy. He aroſe, and with a majeſtic air—"Elmer, my friend, Elmer, my brother," ſaid he, "help me to deſtroy this one noxious weed that intercepts my progreſs, and the reſt of our path will be pleaſure and glory. But oh till it is done, till it's poiſonous roots are twiſted from the earth to which they cling—Elmer, till then, I am miſerable, I am expoſed—to—to.—Yet, what need of this preface. *You will do it, Elmer, you will do it. I ſay, my dear friend, you will exterminate the cauſe of my miſery!*"

The appearance and behaviour of the Earl during this ſpeech, created the

moſt horrible ideas in the mind of Elmer. His brain became feveriſh with the rapid ſucceſſion of thoughts, that ſwiſt and painful as electric fire, ſhocked his imagination. A conviction of the dreadful intentions of this wretched nobleman at once ſtruck his ſoul.

" My—my Lord, my honoured Maſter, my Patron and Benefactor—what dreadful malady has ſeized your noble mind. You ſpeak of miſery, as if—"

" As *if*—as *if*," interrupted the Earl, then ſmiting his breaſt—" O—oh God," ejaculated he, in tones of deepeſt anguiſh. Then raiſing his voice, as in anger, " But hear me, Sir, liſten to the ſequel of my tale, for deſtiny has ſaid, that you ſhall know it, and then apply your emollient *as ifs*, then put on your ſmiles, and cry, " as if Lord Latimore could

could be miſerable." Anſwer me, Sir, Can a man be happy who has ſhed blood—human blood? Can he ever eſcape from tormenting miſery, be his ſtate as dignified as the higheſt among mortals; be his wealth ample as that of Emperors, or his ſoul ambitious as—my own."

"What poſſible cauſe can my Lord have for ſuch reflections," ſaid Elmer, ſtifling his ſenſations."

"In a few words, Elmer, learn the hiſtory of many years, for I perceive I cannot dwell on the detail.

"I think I told you that Octavian Roſenbergh, and ſhe, who had refuſed his proffered vows, were expected at the Caſtle. Well, they came, and with them the Marquis and Marchioneſs Della Zoretta. They were proud per-

ſons, eſpecially the Marquis. They doated on their daughter, who, indeed, was worthy of their adoration, for ſhe was a rare ſpecimen of ſurpaſſing beauty. Not a pretty decorated toy—not a living doll—no, no, but a woman of majeſtic form and countenance, yet not maſculine nor haughty. Female grace ſoftened the intelligent expreſſion of her face, and to gaze upon her was to imbibe at once delight and admiration. When ſhe ſmiled, you were tranſported; when ſhe moved, your eye followed her graceful form and attitude with rapture; but when ſhe ſpoke—oh your heart cannot know a joy equal to the converſation of Olivia. Noble ſentiments, humane feelings, judicious opinions, expreſſed in language the moſt poliſhed, and at the ſame time unaffected, delivered with a grace exactly adapted to the ſubject, now ſparkling with brilliancy, now glowing with animation,

mation, now melting with pathos—ſuch, ſuch was the converſation of Olivia. Say, my friend, was ſhe not worthy the heart of a Latimore? Was it weakneſs, even in me, to fall by the force of ſuch charms? I did fall. A week—a ſingle week, ſpent in the ſociety of Olivia, did more towards ſoftening this heart of mine, than the united power of every beauty I had ſeen before. I muſt be brief. Suffice it then to tell you, Sir, that perceiving Octavian Roſenbergh was without a ray of hope, after a lapſe of time, ſacrificed to propriety, I formally ſurrendered. Yes, Elmer, I bent myſelf before this woman, and—was repulſed; unequivocally, unheſitatingly rejected! Your own thoughts may tell you how I felt the inſult! Her father, her uncle, her relations in Italy, the very higheſt in rank among her connections, proud Princes as they were, deemed themſelves honoured

honoured by the offer of an alliance with one whoſe influence, rank, talents and fortune, promiſed him the moſt elevated point of diſtinction attainable in the firſt country in the world.

" Octavian Roſenbergh looked me in the face after my diſgraceful repulſe, and, as I fancied, ſeemed to ſay— " *Ah, you and I are to be pitied!*" Degradation was in the mere idea, and I ſtamped my feet in rage at the ſuppoſition of being placed upon a level with any man. I hated him ever after.

" But attend—he, this Octavian, was an unſucceſsful rival, and though it goaded me to the very ſoul to be *claſſed* with him, or any one, yet I felt nothing like malice againſt the man; it was an affront rather than an offence, of which I imagined him guilty. But had he been a ſucceſsful rival—How

ſay

ſay you then, Elmer?"—"Why it might, perhaps, have fared as ill with him as with the accurſed."—"Hold, hold—I loſe myſelf."

Placing his hand upon his forehead, the Earl walked ſeveral times acroſs the room in a ſort of troubled ſilence, which Elmer did not venture to interrupt.—At length, heaving a deep ſigh, he ſunk into his chair, and drawing a miniature from his boſom, he waved his hand—"Leave me, leave me, my friend. This weakneſs muſt not have a witneſs. And yet, come back. I muſt diſcover *traits* ſtill more humiliating than is this. Come hither, Elmer, take that miniature; look at it. Does it correſpond with that portrait which I have been deſcribing? It is a reſemblance of Olivia."

"It is, unqueſtionably, my Lord, the

the repreſentation of a noble, and a graceful beauty."

"Yet is it much inferior to the original."

Elmer ſtill held the portrait.

"I have been thinking, my Lord, that ſome where I have ſeen a face, not an exact reſemblance, but ſtill very like to this."

"It muſt have been abroad then," ſaid Lord Latimore. "It is not the complexion of an Engliſh beauty."

"True, my Lord, but there is a ſimilarity of feature and expreſſion—the eye and mouth eſpecially. Oh, I remember—Miſs Melville, my Lord, certainly reſembles"——

"Was this a ſtudied inſult, Sir," exclaimed

exclaimed the Earl, riſing from his chair, and knitting his brow at the aſtoniſhed Secretary. Elmer ſtood ſilent. Lord Latimore, recollecting himſelf, held out his hand to him.—"Your pardon, your pardon. I am to blame. I remember now, that you are unacquainted with an anecdote, in which that girl is ſingularly connected, and which has made the very mention of her painful to me. She has obtained, by a ſtrange coincidence of circumſtances, a knowledge of my miſery. I am uneaſy that ſhe poſſeſſes ſuch a ſecret; and, among other things, Elmer, we muſt contrive the means of quieting my apprehenſions on this ſubject—but of her hereafter. Time hurries on, and hitherto we have been merely telling ſtories. We ſhould be now in action; for we have much, very much to accompliſh, and obſtacles of no common magnitude to batter down. I hate this office

office of confeſſion. I ſhudder at the ſcenes it brings to memory; yet it is neceſſary that you ſhould *know all the paſt*, ere you can co-operate in my deſigns upon the future.

"I have ſaid I was refuſed—rejected. How do you imagine I acted upon this, Sir? The repulſe but urged my reſolution to obtain her. I ſwore an oath ſhe ſhould be mine, and ſat me down to plan a regular and ſyſtematic ſiege. I followed her from Roſenbergh back to her native Bologna, and paſſed ſome months, by ſpecial invitation, at the Zoretta Palace.

"It was long ere I could aſcertain that ſhe had any preference for another, and in the repeated interviews I held with her, I urged my ſuit with unabating ardour, but ever in vain. My country—my religion, ſhe owned, were no

no obſtacles to her choice of a huſband, if theſe points were given up by her parents: a conceſſion to which, in *my* favour, they had previouſly agreed. The Pope, to whom I had written on the occaſion, had favoured me with a moſt flattering anſwer. Thus it appeared, that nothing interfered in the road to conqueſt but the ſimple will of her whom I purſued. Months thus rolled on, in doubt, until one memorable day, when as I was alone, reading in the library, Olivia opened the door abruptly, and with eager confuſion in her countenance, ruſhed into the room, paſſed me, without obſerving me, and ran to the table at the end of the library, upon which lay "Milton's Paradiſe Loſt," in Engliſh, which a few minutes before I had by accident opened. As her eye caught the book, ſhe ejaculated an expreſſion of delight, took it in her hands, and opening it, preſſed her lips to

to a name written on the title page; a name which I never can repeat without a tremour. That name was "Mortimer." There was a door at the end of the library which opened into the lawn, through which ſhe vaniſhed from my ſight, without having once turned her head to the witneſs of ſo intereſting a ſcene. In a moment conviction ſeized me. Mortimer was an Engliſh name; the book was an Engliſh book. On England frequently Olivia had *converſed with pleaſure*: ſhe was even learning the Engliſh language. Could I then doubt? No, no, no. But who was Mortimer? It was a family name, and it was alſo a baptiſmal name. Here was an object to be diſcovered. My heart, that had begun to feel a languor, now became new ſtrung, and beat with renovated ſtrength. A rival!—a rival, to Latimore! And preferred to him! It was enough. Hitherto no impediment to

any

any wiſh I had formed had ever riſen. My ſpirit took alarm, and all the energies of my mind were once again in action. I had thrown away the book I had been reading, and was pacing the library, in a ſtate of agitation not to be deſcribed, when at that critical moment a ſervant announced to me the arrival of old Julian, the Aſtrologer, of Roſenbergh. Show him here inſtantly, exclaimed I to the ſervant.—Julian came to me. Father, ſaid I, you come moſt opportunely; be the object of your journey what it may, I rejoice at it.

"The old man bowed his grey head; he looked upon me with a ſort of tender ſorrow in his countenance, but ſpoke not.

"I entreated him to be ſeated, and encouraged him by every expreſſion of regard

regard and eſteem. At length the old man ſhed tears, and his grief found utterance. It appeared, that the orphan ſon of a deceaſed brother, who had been almoſt the only object of the old man's cares and affections, was recently dead, at Bologna. He had been a youth of much promiſe, he ſaid, and had died in the ſervice of an Engliſh family, who reſided in Bologna.

"An Engliſh family! interrupted I. What is the name of that family?"

"They are Nobles," replied Julian. "The head of their houſe is called the Duke of Derrington, but he is in England with his eldeſt ſon."

"I know—I know, ſaid I; the Ducheſs is here with her two infant daughters, and her accompliſhed ſon, Lord William. He is my particular friend,

friend, and one of the moſt ſenſible and beſt informed young men of his age; for he is ſcarcely eighteen."

"A wonder, my Lord, truly a wonder," ſaid old Julian, "but, doubtleſs, much is to be attributed to the excellence of his tutor and friend. I have never ſeen two men, ſo young, ſo good and ſo accompliſhed as Lord William and Mortimer Sidney."

"Mor—ti—mer Sidney, echoed I! Did you ſay Mortimer? Julian ſaw inſtantly the intereſt he had arouſed, and I declared to him the cauſe of it.

"Thus having diſcovered who this Mortimer was, I aſked old Julian an hundred other queſtions reſpecting him, and at laſt this one. Is it your opinion, that with the fair ſex, this man, I mean his manners, his perſon, his addreſs, would

would be preferred to ſuch as I am?"—Julian frankly anſwered"—

"Oh yes, unqueſtionably, by the generality of women, he would be preferred an hundred degrees above you, my Lord. Have I not often told your Lordſhip, that in love affairs you would be unſucceſsful. I know it from the aſpect of the Heavens at your birth.—Oh, do not let your noble ſoul deſcend to trifling gallantries. You can never be a favourite with women: the ſtars have otherwiſe ordained for you."

"I will not then believe the ſtars, old man, ſaid I."

"And yet," replied he, "recollect, my Lord, they promiſe you a far more glorious deſtiny. Let your own heart be aſked—whether the gifts of talents, fortune, and power ſuperior to all other your

your fellow ſubjects, are not a recompenſe for the denial of the ſhort-lived favours of capricious beauty."

"The ſtars *are* oracles, and I *will* believe them, ſaid I. But ſtill, good father, it is a part of my ambition to obtain this woman. She is worthy of my purſuit, and the contemptuous indifference which ſhe has expreſſed for every ſuitor, renders my ſucceſs a triumph, worthy to be ranked among the ſplendid deſtinies of Latimore."

"Of whom ſpeaks your Lordſhip," ſaid Julian.

"Of Olivia—of the Heireſs of the Marquis Della Zoretta, ſaid I."

"She never will be yours," ſolemnly pronounced old Julian. "Here, view old Julian, my noble, noble Lord; here

ſee my old grey hair ſweep your loved feet;" and he knelt on the floor. I attempted to raiſe him from the humiliating poſture in vain. "Hear me," continued he, in a tone of ſolemnity; "Olivia's deſtiny has been my conſtant ſtudy ever ſince I learnt how dear ſhe was to my young Lord Octavian. It is a dark and melancholy fate. I would not ſhe ſhould know it, but at the moment of her birth, the moſt myſterious and gloomy ſigns, that the book of the high Heavens ever diſcloſed to mortal eyes, were viſible. Conjunctions then were forming, which plainly told Olivia will be a ſorrowful ſojourner on the earth; and though the progreſs of her early years ſeems a contradiction to this prophecy, I do not dare diſcredit the evidence above. On my knees, then, I implore your Lordſhip, ſeek not an alliance with ill fate. Remember, oh, unceaſingly remember, there was one

little

little ſpeck of the malignant in your own bright page of deſtiny; and I forewarn you now, as from an inſpiration irreſiſtible, I forewarn you, that the miſchief threatened lies near Olivia.—Oh, then, ſhun her." Here the old man ceaſed.

"I will not enter into a deſcription of my feelings, as he ſpoke. I found by the bare idea of relinquiſhing her, for the firſt time I found, that I had ſuffered my *preference* to grow into a *paſſion*. I loved her for herſelf, independently of that gratification which a ſtill ſtronger paſſion, my ambition, ſought. Another tide of thought now, alſo, burſt upon me; and, for the firſt time, with force. I perceived that the period was gone by, when I could have ſhaken off the ſhackles of that impreſſion, which the revelation of my deſtiny had forged for my underſtanding. The

ſtrongeſt effort of my mind, to break this chain, was infantile imbecility compared with the ſtrong rivets of my faith. I found that it is as eaſy an undertaking to change the operations and œconomies of nature, as to releaſe the head from prejudices, whilſt the heart, and all its warm effuſions, the very currents of vitality, are repleniſhed by theſe very prejudices. And it was thus with me—it is ſo ſtill. My heart is ſo invigorated by the hopes my mind believed in, that when my hopes ſhall fly, my heart will ceaſe to beat.

" So much did I revere the aged Julian, that I attempted every means of calming an anxiety, which I ſaw troubled him ſeverely. In part I ſucceeded. I then enquired, why he connected the little of the malignant in my horoſcope with my love for Olivia? He anſwered me thus."

" Born

" Born to the higheſt rank; the ſon of a miniſter of ſtate, whoſe influence is known throughout all Europe; there can be little impediment in your progreſs to power, dignities and wealth.—I cannot, therefore, ſuppoſe that your ambition, which is your ruling paſſion, will lead you into evil, ſince as ſplendid an elevation as you can hope for, is almoſt already in your poſſeſſion—at leaſt, the ſteps to it are made ſo eaſy of aſcent, that without deviating, in the ſmalleſt degree, from the path of rectitude, you certainly may attain it: and without guilt you never will know miſery."

" How am I to underſtand you, Julian, ſaid I. Is there, or is there not, ſufficient authenticity in the oracles you conſult? May we, or may we not, not, place a dependence upon their promiſes?"

" 'Twere impiety in thoſe, who truly underſtand them," ſaid he, " to doubt."

" Have you not then told me, how ſplendid a deſtiny is mine? Why then feel thus anxious about trifles? He replied :"—

" Deareſt Lord Latimore, pardon my freedom, but you are, as it were, my ſon in ſcience. I have inſpired you with a new faith, and I feel that I am reſponſible for its effects. Let me, then, conjure you to guard againſt a very alarming error, into which, I perceive, you have fallen. I promiſed you a ſplendid deſtiny 'tis true, but I did not aſſure you of happineſs. That would have been an abſurdity. The Fates have nothing to do with that; it is a ſtructure we muſt build for ourſelves. I ſee, by the poſition of the planets,

planets, whether a ſpirit, ſtarting into exiſtence as a human being, will be grovelling or aſpiring. I ſee too, whether circumſtances will fall out in contradiction, or coincidence with its propenſities and qualities; and, from the whole view of the Heavens, I promiſe ſo much of the future as depends on Fate; but neither happineſs nor miſery are works of Fate; becauſe, neither the one nor the other are confined to, or depend upon the lot, circumſtance, or ſituation of a man. Every day diſcloſes to the obſerving mind happineſs among the pooreſt of our brethren, and miſery in company with wealth and ſplendour."

"I grew out of humour with the old man, as he continued preaching, and interrupted him—Why all this moralizing, Julian. Do you ſuſpect me of any bad intention?" "No, no, my

Lord—not at preſent," ſaid he, "but you are purſuing an object which you cannot obtain without guilt." "Explain, Sir," ſaid I, rather angrily."—"Olivia loves another," ſaid he.—"She never will be yours, my Lord, but through force; and if you have recourſe to that, either by a marriage through the intereſt of her parents, or by ſtill more criminal means, in either caſe, flatter not yourſelf with the promiſe of happineſs; for though, doubtleſs, Fate has ordained you ſhall inherit and increaſe the ſplendour of your father's name for wealth and power, yet, I charge you, keep the talifman of innocence at your breaſt, or however elevated above the reſt of mankind, the object of envy, of flattery, and adoration, ſhall ſigh to himſelf—I am but a living *Monument of Splendid Miſery!*"

The Earl trembled as he uttered theſe words;

words; his lips grew pale, and throwing himſelf backward in his chair, Elmer thought he was fainting.

"Shall I call help," ſaid he.

"Madman—Would you betray me," exclaimed the Earl, recovered by the queſtion. "What help *can* you call? Have you a voice that can awake the dead? Or, have you an antidote for horrid recollections; if not you can bring me no help?"

A tear ſeemed to relieve him. He left his ſeat, and walking once or twice round the room, as before, ſeemed rallying his ſpirits to an effort; and, at length, taking Elmer by the hand, and looking earneſtly in his face—"Now, young man, a few words more will diſcloſe, to you, a ſecret—a dreadful ſecret; and, mark me well, if ever it

eſcape your lips, nay, Sir, if a gueſs at it can be framed from your behaviour, nay, your looks, a vengeance will be poured upon you, ſevere as mortal power can inflict; a puniſhment compared to which, death—tortures, are enjoyments. Now, learn, that though I laughed in my ſleeve at this junction of the moraliſt and aſtrologer, in old Julian, every ſyllable he uttered was truth. At that time, however, I deſpiſed it, and determined to purſue Olivia."

"The buſineſs which had brought Julian to Bologna detained him there ſeveral weeks; in the courſe of which he frequently took occaſion to ſpeak to me on the ſubject of Olivia. He pleaded, and even threatened, but in vain—my reſolve was fixed.

"Lord William Derrington viſited at the

the Zoretta Palace. I embraced the earlieſt opportunity of gleaning from him the hiſtory of this Mortimer. I learned that he was deemed a perfect Mentor by the Derringtons, and that they had flattered the man into hopes of his arriving at the Woolſack through their patronage. At length I ſaw this Mortimer, converſed with him, and by a little artifice, I diſcovered the moſt convincing proofs of his aſpiring paſſion for Olivia. I ſought an early opportunity of hinting my diſcovery to Olivia herſelf. She feigned the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, pretended to feel the inſinuation as an inſult, acknowledged that ſhe reſpected Mr. Sydney for his talents and his virtues, ſpoke warmly in praiſe of Lord Derrington's diſcerning friendſhip for ſo excellent a man, but treated the ſuggeſtion of any tender partiality with the moſt ſovereign contempt.

This flimſy veil did not, however, ſcreen the truth from me. I ſaw by her countenance the joy ſhe felt whenever Lord William propoſed a viſit to his mother's, or a party to ride, walk, ſail, or for any other ſpecies of amuſement; ſince on ſuch occaſions his minion, his Mortimer, was never abſent. Nay, ſir, the ſycophant had ſo far inſinuated himſelf into the favour of the Marquis and Marchioneſs Della Zoretta, that notwithſtanding their characteriſtic pride, the Chevalier Sydney had a general invitation to their palace.

I next communicated my ſuſpicions of this attachment to Lord William, and pointed out the infamy that would attach to his own character, if through the means of his introduction, the conſequence of ridiculous ambition on the part of Sydney, or of blind affection on that of Olivia, ſhould be either the marriage

marriage or ſeduction of the ſole heireſs of the Zoretta name.

"Lord William turned pale at my addreſs, and ſeemed to be overcome with ſurpriſe. He exclaimed it was impoſſible—yet pledged himſelf inſtantly to probe the heart of Mortimer to the bottom, and ſwore that, if he found my apprehenſions juſt, nothing ſhort of the life of ſuch a villian ſhould ſatisfy his revenge.

"After an abſence of two whole days from the Zoretta Palace, he brought Mortimer in his hand, and requeſted my company in the very library, where I had ſeen ſuch ſtrong proofs of Olivia's attachment.

"I obſerved a degree of embarraſſment in the manner of Lord William; but the cool and collected air of this maſter

in

in hypocriſy, this Mortimer, was admirable.

"Lord William," ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to me" has imparted to me a converſation, in which your lordſhip has thought fit to throw out inſinuations, relative to my conduct, of ſuch a nature, as it is impoſſible I can ſubmit to, without demanding of your lordſhip a full and unequivocal explanation."

"Demand! Mr. ——" ſaid I with ſcorn.

"That was my word, ſir:—but, ſurely, the importance of the ſubject on which we meet ſhould elevate our attention above mere words. The honour of the illuſtrious lady"

"I could reſtrain my indignation no longer

longer. Did Lord William Derrington ſaid I, plan this inſult—or, is he merely the abettor of ſuch inſolence? "*The honour of an illuſtrious lady.*" God of my father do I hear rightly? Is then the honour of Olivia Della Zoretta in the cuſtody of a hireling—a tutor!"

"I am ſuperior to your taunts, my Lord," replied Mortimer, coolly.—"They fall mere powerleſs zephyrs on the tranquillity of this boſom; for it is guarded by the *taliſman of innocence*, and humble as your Lordſhip may deem my lot in life, I had much rather be the thing you ſo much deſpiſe, than I would move a *living Monument of Splendid Miſery.*"

"What was there, Elmer, in theſe words, that, like a wizard's charm, they ſhould ſo overpower me? Nerveleſs, trembling

trembling and ſpeechleſs, I ſtood before the witneſs of my weakneſs.

" Mortimer, conſummate in his art, ſeized the moment of my humility, and continued."

" I perceive, my Lord, your ſituation, and I can forgive the injuſtice of your opinions concerning me, ſince I know they have originated in error.—You have ſuppoſed me the preſumptuous lover of the Lady Olivia, and you have further imagined that I am attempting to gain her affections. The diſtance between that lady's rank and mine may, perhaps, in a ſtrictly moral point of view, cauſe ſuch an attempt to be deemed ſelfiſh, mean, and unwarrantable; but yet I hold it virtue, in compariſon with that effort of paſſion or ambition, which ſeeks its own gratification in oppoſition to the will of the object

object it purſues, in defiance of the ſacred laws of love and honour!"

"I anſwered him not, but in ſullen ſilence left the library abruptly. I was convinced that there muſt have been an interview between Mortimer Sydney and the Aſtrologer, Julian. I am never long in my deliberation. I ſaw, at once, the only path of action, and proceeded inſtantly. I ſought the Marquis de la Zoretta. His pride of birth was the weak ſide on which I made the firſt attack. In a few words I ſaid, "I had at length diſcovered the obſtacle which prevented the heir to the moſt powerful ſubject in Europe from becoming the ſon-in-law of the Marquis de la Zoretta. No longer, my dear Marquis, let us fruitleſs ſearch for the *rational* objections of your daughter to Octavian of Roſenbergh, or myſelf. I have diſcovered the cauſe: it is a preference deeply rooted

rooted in Olivia's boſom." The Marquis ſtarted. "Yes," continued I, "ſhe loves another. Had he, on whom ſhe has placed her affections, been her equal; nay, had he been a man of a rank and fortune ſimply reſpectable, I ſhould leſs have felt the force of her preference, but this choice is at once ſo degrading to us, whom ſhe has rejected, to her family, and to herſelf, that the world will raiſe its million voices in loud deriſion of us all."

"The name of this man, my Lord—his denomination—his country—his abode," cried the Marquis, in a tone of impetuoſity."

"You know, ſaid I, the Ducheſs of Derrington."

"She viſits here—well, what of her?"

"Her

" Her ſon, Lord William, too—Does he not viſit here ?"

" And is it he ?—the young diſſembler. The Marchioneſs and myſelf have noticed his attention to Olivia, and her delight in his ſociety, but conſidering his youth, and having heard the Ducheſs an hundred times talk of his intended union with the ſole heireſs of an Iriſh family, we thought no more of it."

" Ah, my dear Marquis, ſaid I, you miſtake me greatly ; 'tis not to Lord William that I allude. He is a youth of excellent intentions, and of conſiderable talents ; but there is one a few years older than himſelf, whoſe artifice has obtained ſuch ſovereign ſway o'er this young nobleman, that he has become the mere tool and inſtrument of that man's intereſts. What would your Excellency think of its being proclaimed to

to the Prince of Beaumont, and all the other illuſtrious branches of your noble houſe, that Olivia de la Zoretta had married the travelling *Tutor* of this Lord William Derrington.

"The Marquis placed his hand upon his ſword, and with pale and quivering lips, ſwore—"that if but the ſhadow of a proof appeared in confirmation of my words, the death of Mortimer Sydney ſhould expiate his crime."

"I took his trembling hand, and led him to the library, where Lord William and his Tutor ſtill remained.

"I repeated my charge to the face of this Mortimer. With aſtoniſhing effrontery he challenged me to proofs. I deſired Olivia herſelf might be ſummoned. Here Lord William interfered. He interceded with the Marquis to ſpare his

his daughter's feelings, and he would himſelf unfold, what he termed, the myſtery. He then, with an hypocritical aſſumption, of which I could not have believed him capable, aſſured the Marquis that his *friend*, as he called the fellow, Mortimer, had borne, on *his* account, and to relieve *his* feelings, the obliquies of an ambitious intermeddler, and a diſappointed and rejected ſuitor. "I declare," continued he, "that my friend, Mortimer Sydney, is above diſſimulation, and I know, that had he, unfortunately for his peace, cheriſhed pretenſions to the heart and hand of Lady Olivia, or of one of a ſtill more exalted rank, he could not have been deterred from an open declaration of his pretenſions by frowns, even more terrific than thoſe of the aſpiring Latimore. Nor would the threats which jealouſy, envy, and ambition print upon the brow of this ſame Latimore, ever

ever have extorted a confeſſion from ſuch hearts as Mortimer's or his friend's. To a father's anger, however, we cannot be indifferent; to appeaſe a father's anguiſh, the father too of the adored Olivia, every other feeling ſhall be ſacrificed: to his *private* ear we will unfold our hearts."

"This is all very ſtrange," ſaid the Marquis, turning to me, "but condeſcend, my Lord, to——"

"I retire, my Lord, ſaid I; and after you have liſtened to the marvellous declaration with which, I perceive, Lord William Derrington deſigns to honour you, I will produce one ſimple proof, that ſhall confound the framers of ſuch an impudent impoſture.

"I withdrew into the garden.

"In

"In about an hour the Marquis joined me. There was an anxiety in his countenance, but the anger which had fired it was extinguiſhed."

"My dear friend," ſaid he, "your zealous intereſt can never be ſufficiently acknowledged by the Zoretta family, but it has miſled you. I am convinced that Mr. Sydney has never harboured a pretenſion to my daughter. Lord William has declared he loves her, and has even acknowledged that he believes Olivia would not reject him, if he were at liberty to offer her his hand. Mark, my dear friend, he has had the inſolence to tell the father of Olivia to his face, that his daughter loves a foreigner, who is not at liberty to offer his hand. I have been cheated out of my revenge for ſuch an inſult to the Zoretta name, by the pity, which the apparent ſufferings of the boy created. He ſhed tears

as

as he told his tale. He even fell upon his knees, imploring me to grant him the privilege of living in hope, that the Duke, his father, might relax from his ſtern reſolution of marrying him to another, or that, continuing to perſiſt in ſuch a reſolution, he might, by a patient delay, abſolve himſelf from the crime of a willing and haſty diſobedience."

" And, doubtleſs, ſaid I, the Marquis de la Zoretta promiſed the young ſtripling to defer taking into his conſideration the overtures of ſuch men as Octavian of Roſenbergh, and wait till the heſitating boy has quite determined whether he will condeſcend to—"

" Hold," cried the Marquis, " you drive me mad."

" Oh, for ſhame, for ſhame, continued

nued I. I tell your Excellency, once for all, you have ſuffered yourſelf to become the dupe of a moſt artful wretch. Say, is it likely that a youth, with whoſe warm blood the power of love has mingled, could, in his eighteenth year, ſo prudently and coolly argue on the ſubject of his love. My noble friend, this is the ſyſtem of this Mortimer, who ſeeks to build his fortune upon the infamy of your illuſtrious houſe. Tell me, has Olivia herſelf ſubſcribed to the truth of this fine ſtory ?"

"Here comes her mother," ſaid the Marquis, "ſhe has been converſing with her—we ſhall learn."

"The Marchioneſs met us. She was in tears; and, in the language of diſtreſs, acknowledged her belief, that the happineſs of Olivia depended upon her union with Lord William."

and the ſtripling's ſword conquered Latimore. Oh, if ever I ceaſe to hate him for ſuch a ſtroke of infamy, forſake me fortune. No, unto death will I purſue him, with every torture that malice and hatred can invent: aye, on the very brink of the gulph of everlaſting infamy would I ſtruggle with him, nor quit my hold till one or both of us have fallen to its loweſt depth.

" Now, mark again. The time allowed Olivia for deliberation expired. She had been cloſely confined in the ſhort interval, and every branch of the family had ſtrove in vain to turn the purpoſe of her father. She made her election for the cloiſter. She was admitted, and took the veil. The Derringtons and their Mortimer returned to England, and I was appointed to accompany Lord P—— to Berlin.

" About

" About twelvemonths afterwards we returned again to Vienna. The old Count Rosenbergh was then dead, and Octavian had succeeded to the title and estates, He gave me pressing and repeated invitations to spend some time at Rosenbergh castle, and at length I went there. My mind, by this time, had yielded to some remorse for the part I had taken against Olivia, but I still cherished for Lord William and his minion increasing hate. At Rosenbergh castle I once more encountered Old Julian. His behaviour was, now intolerable. He reviled me in the broadest terms, as the author of the misery of Olivia and Lord William."

" Latimore," said he, " I warned you of that malignant spot in your bright destiny, which your own conduct has swelled into a cloud of misery, that now hovers over you, big with

deſtruction. Olivia is miſerable—Lord William is miſerable, but their miſery is bliſs compared to that which will be thine, *thou living Monument of Splendid Miſery!*"

"**Enraged, I thruſt the old man from me with contempt, and commanded him never to appear before me again. Three days afterwards, having convinced myſelf, by reflection, how unjuſtly I had behaved to him, I determined to make him a viſit of repentance,** and to aſk him for a copy of my horoſcope, which, before our rupture at Bologna, he had promiſed to draw for me. With this determination I repaired about noon to the Aſtrological Tower. The old woman, who occupied the lower apartment, told me that Julian had been ſtudying all night upon ſome particular account, and had ſtrictly ordered her not to interrupt him

him before twelve o'clock, when ſhe was to carry him his breakfaſt. She was then preparing the meal, and ſaid ſhe would acquaint him that I was there. In a few minutes the poor creature, with terror in her countenance, returned with tidings that her maſter, as ſhe termed the Aſtrologer, was vaniſhed. "He has not been there all night, for certain," cried ſhe, "for his night-gown, in which he always ſtudies, is untouched where I left it, and the robe and girdle he had on in the day time are vaniſhed with him."

"As well as terror permitted her, the old woman related her fears, that Satan had run away with her maſter, for ſhe was perſuaded he had not paſſed her chamber, which was the only paſſage by which he could leave the tower. I, myſelf, aſcended the winding ſtaircaſe, and explored the ſtudy of

the ſtatues. No Julian was there—but on the table I found two letters, directed, one for the Count of Roſenbergh, and the other for myſelf, Inſtantly breaking the ſeal, I read this very letter, which contained this horoſcope."

The Earl here drew them from his boſom. The latter he had ſhewn to Elmer in his laſt interview. The letter contained theſe words:—

" Receive, Latimore, the tokens of ſplendour, power, wealth and talents, which are decreed to you;—Virtue alone is wanting to render your life a ſource of happineſs to yourſelf, and a brilliant page in the annals of the world. She, on whom you have heaped a weight of injuries, which ſinks her to an early grave, pardons you and dies. He, for whoſe ſake ſhe ſuffers, and will die,

die, lives an object of admiration and esteem to the rest of mankind;—to you an object of jealousy and hate. With this last testimony of my remembrance, your horoscope, receive my last advice. Repair the injuries of Olivia by justice to Lord William. He is your rival in talents, and I know he will be your rival in power. Torn by your arm from the temple of Hymen and peace, he has devoted himself to the service of his country, and I know he will be eminent in war and in council, for he seconds the promises of his destiny by a devotedness to virtue. At his birth, as at your own, presided Jupiter, that illustrious star of glory. Olivia's destiny has been to him as it has been to you, a speck of misery in a field of lustre, but here mark the difference—his honour has not been sullied—his virtue has not been shaken by the love he cherished, nor even by the pangs of

diſappointment which he ſtill endures. Can Latimore's reſentful breaſt echo ſuch peaceful ſtrains? Ah, no—I know him well. I know that even now, when the ſweet glow of beauty is hourly diſappearing from thoſe cheeks, on which the hand of melancholy, in her midnight vigils, has marked the mortal ſickneſs of the heart in death-pale characters, I know he ſighs for the poſſeſſion of thoſe charms himſelf has ſacrificed, and ſtill purſues, with darts of malice, the man preferred to Latimore. Yet hear; oh, liſten, ere too late, to wiſdom and to virtue. Here let the conflict of baſe paſſions end; for if they ſtill go on in warfare with the better knowledge of your head, and the better feelings of your heart, I ſwear to you that never have mankind yet witneſſed ſuch a union of Miſery with Splendour, as awaits Lord Latimore."

"Well,

"Well, Elmer," ſaid the Earl, "What think you of old Julian as a moralizer? His language is threatening with a vengeance you perceive; yet will I, in deſpite of this old fool's anathemas, purſue my glory. No obſtacles ſhall arreſt my reſolute purſuit, ſhort of death or conqueſt.

"To return. The letter to the Count was merely a formal farewel, and ſtated that old Julian had choſen to end his days in a retreat, that never would be known. The Count, little anxious either concerning his aſtrologer or his ſtudies, gave himſelf no trouble to diſcover his retreat. About a month after his departure a courier arrived from Bologna, ſtating that Olivia had eſcaped from her convent, and had eluded all purſuit. The date of her elopement tallied ſo exactly with that of old Julian's retreat, that no doubt could be

left reſpecting his being concerned in her flight. The intereſt he had ever ſhewn too for Lord William, his appearance at Bologna, where it was proved never dwelt any of his relations, all tended to confirm our opinion. The Count and I ſat off inſtantly for Bologna.—The Marquis and Marchioneſs were in deſpair, and their ignorance of the future deſtination of their child added ten fold to their anguiſh.

" By enquiries, naturally directed to England and the Derrington family, it appeared that Lord William, at the time of Olivia's elopement, was with the Duke, his father, at their eſtate, in Scotland, but that Mr. Sydney had not been heard of for many months, having entirely taken leave of the family.

" This information plainly pointed him out as the author and companion of

of her flight; and expoſed the duplicity and mock virtue of Lord William, Julian, and Olivia herſelf.

" Time rolled on, without affording the flighteſt clue by which a diſcovery might be traced. Rewards had been offered, puniſhments denounced in vain, and the family, formally renouncing Olivia, put themſelves in mourning as for her death.

" Accident, however, about two years afterwards, led me to the place of her retreat. I was travelling through the ſouth of France, and had ſtopped to change horſes at an obſcure ſmall village, which pleaſed me ſo much by its appearance, that I determined to dine there. Sauntering through ſome delightful vineyards, my ears were ſtruck by the tones of a lute. I liſtened, and followed the ſound. It led me to a cottage, ſimple and elegant, at the window

dow of which ſat a female, whoſe form, even at a diſtance, commanded admiration; but imagine my ſenſations, when upon a near approach, I recogniſed *Olivia*, as beautiful as ever! The firſt impulſe led me to the gate; a little dog barked; the fair refugee diſappeared from the window, and an old man came to the door. It was Julian, of Roſenbergh. At the ſight of me he fled into the houſe, and in a few minutes appeared the villain, Mortimer. Oh, Elmer, why, why did the fates ordain that meeting?"

Here the Earl placed his hand upon his forehead. "I am ſick, I am faint," cried he, "the ſtruggles of my heart are too powerful for this mortal tenement. Leave me awhile, Elmer. When I have recovered my ſtrength I will ſend Durand to deſire your attendance, and you ſhall hear the concluſion of my ſtory."

END OF VOL. I.

Holt: Printed by J. Parſlee.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
3 9015 06576 9419

A 520073